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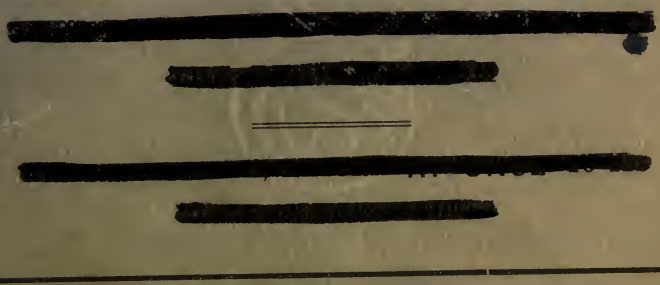

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FARRAGUT'S FLEET PASSING FORTS JACKSON AND ST. PHILIP.

From a painting by Carlton T. Chapman.

THE HISTORY OF OUR NAVY

FROM ITS ORIGIN TO THE PRESENT DAY

1775–1897

BY

JOHN R. SPEARS

AUTHOR OF "THE PORT OF MISSING SHIPS," "THE GOLD DIGGINGS OF CAPE HORN," ETC.

WITH MORE THAN FOUR HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS
MAPS AND DIAGRAMS

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOLUME IV.

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TO ALL WHO WOULD SEEK PEACE
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CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER I. THE STATE OF THE NAVY IN 1859 . 1

A Brief Story of the Development of the Warship that was Propelled by both Sails and Steam—The Remarkable Floating Battery of 1814—Barron's Idea of a Ram—The Stevens Floating Battery—Ericsson's Screw Propeller—Stockton and the First Screw Warship—Experiments with Great Guns—Discoveries of Bomford and Rodman—Practical Work by Dahlgren—A Comparison of Yankee Frigates with a Class of British Ships "Avowedly Built to Cope" with them—The Condition of the *Personnel.*

CHAPTER II. BLOCKADING THE SOUTHERN PORTS 28

Lincoln's Proclamation—It was Something of a Task to Close 185 Inlets and Patrol 11,953 Miles of Sea-beaches, especially with the Force of Ships in Hand—One Merchant's Notion of the Efficiency of Thirty Sailing Vessels—Gathering and Building Blockaders—Incentives and Favoring Circumstances for Blockade-runners—When Perjury Failed and Uncle Sam was Able to Strike without Waiting for Act of Congress—When Blockade-runners Came to New York and Yankee Smokeless Coal was in Demand.

CHAPTER III. LOSS OF THE NORFOLK NAVY YARD 66

Effective Work Done by Southern Naval Officers who Continued to Wear the National Uniform that they might the more Readily Betray the National Government—The Secretary of the Navy was Deceived and the Commandant at Norfolk Demoralized—William Mahone's Tricks Added to the Demoralization at the Yard, and it was Abandoned at Last in a Shameful Panic—Property that was Worth Millions of Dollars, and Guns that Took Thousands of Lives, Fell into the Confederates' Hands—The First Naval Battle of the War—Three Little Wooden Vessels with Seven Small Guns Sent against a Well-built Fort Mounting Thirteen Guns—The Hazardous Work of Patrolling the Potomac.

PAGE

CHAPTER IV. A STORY OF CONFEDERATE PRIVATEERS 84

They Did Plenty of Damage for a Time, but their Career was Brief —Capture of the First of the Class, and Trial of her Crew on a Charge of Piracy—Reasons why they could not be Held as Criminals—Luck of the *Jefferson Davis*—A Negro who Recaptured a Confederate Prize to Escape the Terrors of Slavery—A Skipper who Thought a Government Frigate was a Merchantman—The "Nest" behind Cape Hatteras.

CHAPTER V. THE FORT OF HATTERAS INLET TAKEN 99

An Expedition Planned by the Navy Department that Resulted in the First Federal Victory of the Civil War—An Awkward Landing Followed by Ineffectual Fire from Ships under Way—One Fort Taken and Abandoned—Anchored beyond Range of the Fort and Compelled Surrender by Means of the Big Pivot Guns—A Wearisome Race from Chicamicomico to Hatteras Lighthouse Won by the Federals—Capture of Roanoke Island—Origin of the American Medal of Honor.

CHAPTER VI. ALONG SHORE IN THE GULF OF MEXICO 112

The Shameful Story of Pensacola and Fort Pickens—When Lieutenant Russell Burned the *Judah*—A British Consul's Actions when Confederate Forts were Attacked at Galveston—Extraordinary Panic at the Head of the Passes in the Mississippi when Four Great Warships, Carrying Forty-five of the Best Guns Afloat, Fled from a Disabled Tugboat that was Really Unarmed—Once more in Galveston—Lieutenant Jouett's Fierce Fight when he Destroyed the *Royal Yacht.*

CHAPTER VII. STORY OF THE TRENT AFFAIR . 140

Capt. Charles Wilkes, of the American Navy, Took Four Confederate Diplomatic Agents from a British Ship Bound on a Regular Voyage between Neutral Parts, and without any Judicial Proceeding Cast them into a Military Prison—A Case that Created Great Excitement Throughout the Civilized World—A Swift Demand, with a Threat of War Added, Made by the British—Comparing this Case with another of Like Nature—The United States once Went to War

to Establish the Principle which Captain Wilkes Ignored—The British Officially Acknowledge that the Americans were Justified in Declaring War in 1812.

PAGE

CHAPTER VIII. THE CAPTURE OF PORT ROYAL . 161

A Fleet of Seventeen Ships, Carrying 155 Guns, Sent to Take a Harbor that would Make a Convenient Naval Station for the Atlantic Blockaders—There were Two "Exceedingly Well-built Earthworks" "Rather Heavily Armed" Defending the Channel, but one Part of the Squadron Attacked them in Front, another Enfiladed them, and in Less than Five Hours the Confederates Fled for Life —A Heavy Gale Weathered with Small Loss—Interesting Incidents of the Battle.

CHAPTER IX. THE *MONITOR* AND THE *MERRIMAC* . 184

Superior Activity of the Confederates in Preparing for Ironclad Warfare Afloat—Story of the Building and Arming of the *Merrimac* —She was a Formidable Ship in Spite of Defects in Detail, but her Design was not the Best Conceivable—Origin and Description of the Ship that Revolutionized the Navies of the World—A Wondrous Trial Trip—For One Day the *Merrimac* was Irresistibly Triumphant—Two Fine Ships of the Old Style Destroyed while she Herself Suffered but Little—The Magnificent Fight of the *Cumberland*— A Difference in Opinions.

CHAPTER X. FIRST BATTLE BETWEEN IRONCLADS . 214

A Comparison between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* by the English Standard of 1812—It Astonished the Spectators to See the Tiny *Monitor's* Temerity—After Half a Day's Firing it was Plain that the Guns could not Penetrate the Armor—Attempts to Ram that Failed—The *Merrimac* A-leak—Captain Worden of the *Monitor* Disabled when the *Merrimac's* Fire was Concentrated on the Pilot-house—Where the *Monitor's* Gunners Failed—Fair Statement of the Result of the Battle—Worden's Faithful Crew—The *Merrimac* Defied the *Monitor* in May, but when Norfolk was Evacuated she had to be Abandoned and was Burned at Craney Island—Loss of the *Monitor*.

CHAPTER XI. WITH THE MISSISSIPPI GUNBOATS . 239

Creating a Fleet for the Opening of the Water Route across the Confederacy—Ironclads that were not Shot-proof, but Fairly Efficient nevertheless—Guns that Burst and Boilers that were Searched by

Shot from the Enemy—When Grant Retreated and was Covered by a Gunboat—First View of Torpedoes—Capture of Fort Henry—A Disastrous Attack on Fort Donelson—When Walke Braved the Batteries at Island No. 10—The Confederate Defence Squadron at Fort Pillow—The First Battle of Steam Rams—Frightful Effects of Bursted Boilers—In the White River—Farragut Appears.

PAGE

CHAPTER XII. FARRAGUT AT NEW ORLEANS . 311

It was Hard Work Getting the Squadron into the Mississippi—Preparing the Ships to Run by the Forts Guarding the River—Mortar Schooners Hidden by Tree Branches—The Forts were Well Planned, but Poorly Armed—A Barrier Chain that was no Barrier at the Last—The Heterogeneous Confederate Squadron—The Fire-rafts—Work of the Coast Survey—Bravery of Caldwell—Foreigners who Interfered—Work of the Mortar Fleet—When the Squadron Drove past the Forts—Scattering the Confederate Squadron—Nevertheless, at least Three Good Captains were Found among them—Sinking the *Varuna*—Fate of the Ram *Manassas*—Surrender of the Forts—End of the Ironclad *Louisiana*—The Work of the Mississippi Squadron.

CHAPTER XIII. FARRAGUT AT MOBILE . . 377

The Forts and the Confederate Squadron the Union Forces were Compelled to Face—The Confederate Ironclad just Missed being a most Formidable Ship—Tedious Wait for Monitors—When the Southwest Wind Favored—There was a Fierce Blast from the Forts at First, but the Torpedo was Worse than Many Guns—Fate of the *Tecumseh* and Captain Craven—The Last Words of the Man for whom "there was no Afterward"—Torpedoes that Failed beneath the Flagship—Captain Stevens on the Deck of his Monitor—When Neilds Unfurled the Old Flag in the midst of the Storm—How Farragut was Lashed to the Mast—Jouett would not be Intimidated by a Leadsman—Mobbing the *Tennessee*.

CHAPTER XIV. TALES OF THE CONFEDERATE CRUISERS 407

The most Instructive Chapter in the History of the United States—Work Accomplished by an Energetic Seaman in a Ship his Brother Officers Condemned—Brilliant Work of the *Florida* under John Newland Maffitt—Bad Marksmanship and a Worse Lookout off Mobile—A Case of Violated Neutrality—Semmes and the *Alabama*—The

Battle with the *Kearsarge*—What Kind of a Man is it that Fights his Ship till she Sinks under him ?—American Commerce Destroyed—The British without a Rival on the Sea, at Last, and at Very Small Cost.

PAGE

CHAPTER XV. THE *ALBEMARLE* AND CUSHING . 452

A Formidable Warship was Built under Remarkable Conditions to Enable the Confederates to Regain Control of the Inland Waters of North Carolina—Very Successful at First, but she was Laid up to Await the Building of another One, and then came Cushing with his Little Torpedo Boat, and the Confederate Hopes were Destroyed with their Ship.

CHAPTER XVI. THE NAVY AT CHARLESTON . 465

It was a Well-guarded Harbor, and the Channel was Long and Crooked—The "Stone Fleet" and the Attitude of Foreign Powers—Brief Career of Two Confederate Ironclads—The Blockade was not Raised—A Confederate Cruiser Burned—Utter Failure of the Ironclad Attacks on the Forts—Capture of the Confederate Warship *Atlanta*—"Boarders Away" at Fort Sumter—Magnificent Bravery of the Men who Manned the Confederate Torpedo Boats.

CHAPTER XVII. CAPTURE OF FORT FISHER . 503

It was One of the Best Works in the South, though not well Located—Butler's Powder-boat Scheme, and what he Expected to Accomplish by it—Throwing 15,000 Shells at the Fort Disabled Eight Great Guns out of a Total of Thirty-eight—Butler Thought the Fort still too Strong and would not Try—He did not even Make Intrenchments According to Orders—Gen. A. H. Terry, with 6,000 Soldiers and 2,000 from the Ships, Easily Took the Fort Three Weeks Later—The Navy's Last Fight in the Civil War.

CHAPTER XVIII. STORY OF THE NEW NAVY . 523

The Folly of Allowing other Nations to Experiment for us—In Spite of what we Learned from their Mistakes, we were Unable, when we First Began for ourselves, to Build even a First-class Cruiser—The Result of Ten Years of Earnest Work—Battle-ships whose Power is Conceded by Foreign Writers—Cruisers that Awakened the Pride of the Nation—Three "Newfangled Notions"—A Yankee Admiral at Rio Janeiro and a Yankee Lieutenant on the Coast of Mexico—The One Important Fact about the New Navy.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

FARRAGUT'S FLEET PASSING FORTS JACKSON AND ST. PHILIP. (From a painting by Carlton T. Chapman), . *Frontispiece*

A THIRTY-TWO-POUND CARRONADE FROM THE *CONSTITUTION*. 1

THE *MINNESOTA* AS A RECEIVING SHIP. (From a photograph by Rau), ... 3

A LOOP-PATTERN GUN OF 1836—A TYPE WHICH RUNS BACK OVER 100 YEARS, ... 4

A THIRTY-TWO-POUNDER FROM THE CAPTURED *MACEDONIAN* —NOW AT THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD. (From a photograph), ... 5

A THIRTY-TWO-POUNDER FROM THE CAPTURED *MACEDONIAN*. 7

OLD CAST-IRON THIRTY-TWO-POUNDER (BELIEVED TO BE SPANISH), ... 8

JOHN ERICSSON, ... 10

THE *GREAT WESTERN*—ONE OF THE FIRST STEAMSHIPS TO CROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN. (After an old painting), . 13

TWELVE-INCH WROUGHT-IRON GUN—THE MATE TO THE "PEACEMAKER," WHICH BURST ON THE *PRINCETON*. (From a photograph of the original at the Brooklyn Navy Yard), ... 14

U. S. IRONCLAD STEAMSHIP *ROANOKE*. (From an old lithograph), ... 15

U. S. FRIGATE *PENSACOLA* OFF ALEXANDRIA. (From a photograph taken in 1865), ... 16

A TWELVE-POUND BRONZE HOWITZER—THE FIRST ONE MADE IN THE UNITED STATES. (From a photograph of the original at the Brooklyn Navy Yard), ... 18

A DAHLGREN GUN, ... 19

TWO BLAKELY GUNS AT THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD, . 22

THE BLOCKADED COAST. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 29

MAP SHOWING POSITION OF UNITED STATES SHIPS OF WAR IN COMMISSION MARCH 4, 1861, ... 33

PAGE

GIDEON WELLES. (From a photograph), ... 34
GUSTAVUS V. FOX. (From an engraving), ... 36
GARRETT J. PENDERGRAST, ... 39
A FOUR-POUND CAST-IRON GUN CAPTURED FROM A BLOCKADE-RUNNER, ... 49
AN EIGHTEEN-POUND RIFLE CAPTURED FROM A BLOCKADE-RUNNER, ... 52
A SIX-POUND GUN CAPTURED FROM A BLOCKADE-RUNNER, . 53
A NASSAU VIEW—ALONG THE SHORE EAST OF THE TOWN. (From a photograph by Rau), ... 54
NASSAU SCHOONERS. (From a photograph by Rau), . . 55
THE BLOCKADE-RUNNER *TEASER*. (From a photograph made in 1864), ... 60
WASHINGTON, D. C., AND ITS VICINITY, ... 67
HIRAM PAULDING. (From an engraving by Hall), . . . 71
A VIEW OF THE NORFOLK NAVY YARD. (From a photograph by Cook), ... 73
THE OLD *NEW HAMPSHIRE* AT THE NORFOLK NAVY YARD. (From a photograph by Cook), ... 77
BURNING OF THE VESSELS AT THE NORFOLK NAVY YARD, . 79
THE CONFEDERATE STATES PRIVATEER *SAVANNAH*, LETTER OF MARQUE NO. 1, CAPTURED OFF CHARLESTON BY THE U. S. BRIG *PERRY*, LIEUTENANT PARROTT, . . . 88
DESTRUCTION OF THE PRIVATEER *PETREL* BY THE *ST. LAWRENCE*. (From an engraving by Hinshelwood of the painting by Manzoni), ... 95
S. H. STRINGHAM. (From an engraving by Buttre), . . 100
B. F. BUTLER. (From a photograph), ... 101
BOMBARDMENT AND CAPTURE OF THE FORTS AT HATTERAS INLET, N. C. (From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives), ... 103
EIGHT-INCH MORTAR CAPTURED AT HATTERAS, . . . 107
L. M. GOLDSBOROUGH. (From an engraving by Buttre), . 108
STEPHEN C. ROWAN. (From a photograph), ... 109
ATTACK ON ROANOKE ISLAND—LANDING OF THE TROOPS. (From an engraving of the painting by Chappel), facing . 110
LANDING OF TROOPS ON ROANOKE ISLAND. (From an engraving by Perine of a drawing by Momberger), facing . 110
SURRENDER OF THE NAVY YARD AT PENSACOLA. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 113
HENRY WALKE. (From a photograph), ... 114

PAGE

JOHN G. SPROSTON. (From a photograph at the Naval Academy, Annapolis), ... 120
GALVESTON HARBOR. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), 122
PASSES OF THE MISSISSIPPI. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 126
JAMES MURRAY MASON AND JOHN SLIDELL. (The two captured commissioners), ... 141
CHARLES WILKES. (From an engraving by Dodson of the portrait by Sully), ... 143
WILLIAM H. SEWARD. (From a photograph), ... 155
S. F. DUPONT. (From a photograph), ... 163
C. R. P. RODGERS. (From a photograph), ... 164
S. W. GODON. (From a painting at the Naval Academy, Annapolis), ... 165
JOSIAH TATTNALL. (From an engraving by Hall), . . 168
PLAN OF FORT WALKER ON HILTON HEAD. (From a drawing by R. Sturgis, Jr., in 1861), ... 169
BOMBARDMENT OF PORT ROYAL, S. C. (From an engraving by Ridgeway of a drawing by Parsons), ... 175
BOMBARDMENT AND CAPTURE OF FORTS WALKER AND BEAUREGARD, NOVEMBER 7, 1861. (From an engraving by Perine), ... 179
FRANKLIN BUCHANAN, ... 189
THE *NEW IRONSIDES* IN ACTION. (From a photograph, of a drawing, owned by Mr. C. B. Hall), ... 190
THE GIANT AND THE DWARFS; OR, JOHN E. AND THE LITTLE MARINERS. (From a Swedish caricature, February 10, 1867), ... 191
THE *MONITOR*, ... 192
HAMPTON ROADS. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), . 196
FORTRESS MONROE AND ITS VICINITY, ... 199
THE SINKING OF THE *CUMBERLAND* BY THE IRONCLAD *MERRIMAC*. (From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives), ... 202
THE *MERRIMAC* RAMMING THE *CUMBERLAND*. (From a drawing by M. J. Burns), ... 205
GEORGE U. MORRIS. (From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall), ... 207
J. L. WORDEN. (From a photograph), ... 216
DECK VIEW OF THE *MONITOR* AND HER CREW. (From a photograph), ... 219

PAGE

THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE *MERRIMAC* AND THE *MONITOR*. (From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives), . . 221

IN THE *MONITOR'S* TURRET, ... 223

THE ACTION BETWEEN THE *MONITOR* AND THE *MERRIMAC*. (From an engraving of the picture by Chappel), . . 227

GROUP OF OFFICERS ON DECK OF THE *MONITOR*. (From a photograph), ... 232

DESTRUCTION OF THE *MERRIMAC* OFF CRANEY ISLAND. (From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives), . . 237

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY—CAIRO TO MEMPHIS. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 242–3

THE *CAIRO*. (From a photograph), ... 244

THE *PITTSBURG*. (After a photograph), ... 245

THE MISSISSIPPI FLEET OFF MOUND CITY, ILLINOIS. (From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall), ... 247

A. H. FOOTE. (From a photograph), ... 250

THE BATTLE OF BELMONT: FIRST ATTACK BY THE *TAYLOR* AND THE *LEXINGTON*. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), 253

BATTLE OF BELMONT: U. S GUNBOATS REPULSING THE ENEMY DURING THE DEBARKATION. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 257

INTERIOR OF THE *TAYLOR* DURING THE BATTLE OF BELMONT. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), . . . 259

BATTLE OF FORT HENRY. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 263

BATTLE OF FORT DONELSON. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 269

EXPLOSION ON BOARD THE *CARONDELET* AT THE BATTLE OF FORT DONELSON. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), 273

U. S. FLOTILLA DESCENDING THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 277

BATTLE WITH FORT NO. 1 ABOVE ISLAND NO. 10. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 279

THE *CARONDELET* RUNNING THE GAUNTLET AT ISLAND NO. 10. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), . . . 285

THE *CARONDELET* ATTACKING THE FORTS BELOW ISLAND NO. 10. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), . . . 287

U. S. GUNBOATS CAPTURING THE CONFEDERATE FORTS BELOW ISLAND NO. 10, APRIL 7TH. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 291

BATTLE OF FORT PILLOW. (From a painting by Admiral Walke) 295

PAGE

THE BATTLE OF FORT PILLOW. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 299

THE BATTLE OF MEMPHIS—FIRST POSITION. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 304

AFTER THE BATTLE OF MEMPHIS. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 305

BATTLE OF MEMPHIS—THE CONFEDERATES RETREATING. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 309

DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT. (From a photograph), . . 312

THIRTEEN-INCH MORTAR FROM FARRAGUT'S FLEET. (From a photograph made at the Brooklyn Navy Yard), . . 316

NEW ORLEANS, LA., AND ITS VICINITY, ... 319

MORTAR BOATS. (From an engraving), ... 322

BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 327

BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 331

THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 335

CONFEDERATE IRONCLAD RAM *STONEWALL JACKSON*. (From a photograph), ... 337

THE *ESSEX* AFTER RUNNING THE BATTERIES AT VICKSBURG AND PORT HUDSON. (After a photograph), . . . 341

THE *CARONDELET* AFTER PASSING VICKSBURG. (From a photograph), ... 342

BATTLE BETWEEN THE *CARONDELET* AND THE *ARKANSAS*. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 346

BATTLE BETWEEN THE *ARKANSAS* AND THE *CARONDELET*. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 347

DESTRUCTION OF THE *ARKANSAS* NEAR BATON ROUGE, AUGUST 4, 1862. (From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives), ... 349

DAVID D. PORTER. (From a photograph), ... 350

ADMIRAL FARRAGUT PASSING PORT HUDSON. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 354

THE U. S. FLOTILLA PASSING THE VICKSBURG BATTERIES. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 355

BATTLE OF GRAND GULF—FIRST POSITION. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 359

BATTLE OF GRAND GULF—SECOND POSITION. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 364

PAGE

BATTLE OF GRAND GULF—THIRD POSITION. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 365
ADMIRAL PORTER ON DECK OF FLAGSHIP AT GRAND ÉCORE, LA. (From a photograph), ... 368
U. S. RAM *LAFAYETTE*. (From a photograph), . . . 369
U. S. GUNBOAT *FORT HINDMAN*. (From a photograph), . 370
JOSEPH BAILEY. (From a photograph), ... 371
RED RIVER DAM. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), . 373
THE FLEET PASSING THE DAM. (From an engraving), . 375
ENTRANCE TO MOBILE BAY. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 378
FARRAGUT AND DRAYTON ON BOARD THE *HARTFORD* AT MOBILE BAY. (Drawn by I. W. Taber from a photograph), ... 387
BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 390–91
T. A. M. CRAVEN. (From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall), ... 393
BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY. (From a painting by Admiral Walke), ... 397
THE CONFEDERATE RAM *TENNESSEE*, CAPTURED AT MOBILE. (From a photograph), ... 404
RAPHAEL SEMMES. (From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall), ... 408
THE *FLORIDA* RUNNING THE BLOCKADE AT MOBILE. (After a painting by R. S. Floyd), ... 421
"A PRIZE DISPOSED AND ONE PROPOSED." (After a painting by R. S. Floyd), ... 425
RAPHAEL SEMMES AND HIS *ALABAMA* OFFICERS. (From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall), ... 433
JOHN A. WINSLOW. (From a photograph), ... 436
ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE U. S. S. *KEARSARGE* AND THE *ALABAMA* OFF CHERBOURG, ON SUNDAY, JUNE 19, 1864. (From a French lithograph), ... 439
THE *KEARSARGE* SINKING THE *ALABAMA*. (From an engraving), ... 444
ACTION BETWEEN THE *KEARSARGE* AND THE *ALABAMA*. (From an engraving of the painting by Chappel), . . 445
WHITWORTH RIFLE CAPTURED FROM THE *SHENANDOAH*, . 448
THREE FAMOUS CONFEDERATE CRUISERS. (From a painting by M. J. Burns), ... 449

PAGE

WILLIAM B. CUSHING. (From a photograph), . . . 457
CUSHING BLOWING UP THE *ALBEMARLE*, ... 462
CHARLESTON HARBOR. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), 466
BATTERY BROWN: TWENTY-EIGHT-INCH PARROTT RIFLE. (From a photograph by Haas & Peale), ... 468
IN THE CHARLESTON BATTERIES: 300-POUNDER PARROTT RIFLE AFTER BURSTING OF NOZZLE. (From a photograph by Haas & Peale), ... 469
GENERAL MAP OF CHARLESTON HARBOR, SOUTH CAROLINA, SHOWING CONFEDERATE DEFENCES AND OBSTRUCTIONS, 476–7
IRONCLADS AND MONITORS BOMBARDING THE DEFENCES AT CHARLESTON. (From an engraving), ... 481
CONFEDERATE IRONCLAD *ATLANTA*, CAPTURED AT WASSAW SOUND, JUNE 17, 1863. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 487
THE *WEEHAWKEN* AND THE *ATLANTA*. (From a wood-cut), . 488
JOHN A. B. DAHLGREN. (From a photograph), . . . 489
BOMB-PROOF OF FORT WAGNER. (From a photograph by Haas & Peale), ... 491
BATTERY HAYES: EIGHTEEN-INCH PARROTT RIFLE—DISMOUNTED BREACHING BATTERY AGAINST SUMTER. (From a photograph by Haas & Peale), ... 492
BATTERY KIRBY: TWENTY-EIGHT-INCH SEACOAST MORTARS AGAINST SUMTER. (From a photograph by Haas & Peale), 493
ADMIRAL DAHLGREN AND STAFF ON THE *PAWNEE* AT CHARLESTON. (From a photograph), ... 496
SKETCH SHOWING TORPEDO BOATS AS CONSTRUCTED AT CHARLESTON, S. C. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), facing 498
THE ENTRANCE TO CAPE FEAR RIVER, SHOWING FORT FISHER. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), . . 504
PLAN AND SECTIONS OF FORT FISHER. (From "The Navy in the Civil War"), ... 506
THE BOMBARDMENT OF FORT FISHER. (From a lithograph), 517
T. O. SELFREDGE. (From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall), ... 519
SECOND ATTACK UPON FORT FISHER BY THE U. S. NAVY, UNDER REAR-ADMIRAL D. D. PORTER, JANUARY 13, 14, 15, 1865, ... 521
THE OLD METHOD OF HANDLING A SHIP'S BOWSPRIT. (From an old engraving), ... 524

PAGE

HAULING A VESSEL INTO PORT A HUNDRED YEARS AGO. (From an old engraving), ... 525

THE WHITE SQUADRON IN MID-OCEAN. (From a drawing by R. F. Zogbaum), ... 529

U. S. S. *CHARLESTON*, SAN DIEGO HARBOR. (From a photograph), ... 531

THE *COLUMBIA* ON HER GOVERNMENT SPEED TRIAL. (From a photograph by Rau), ... 534

PLAN OF THE *IOWA*, ... 536

PLAN OF THE *CONSTITUTION*, ... 537

THE *VESUVIUS*. (From a photograph by Rau), ... 541

LAUNCHING OF ONE OF THE HOLLAND BOATS, THE *HOLLAND*, AT ELIZABETHPORT, N. J., 1897. (From a photograph belonging to the John P. Holland Co.), ... 543

ANOTHER OF THE HOLLAND SUBMARINE BOATS: THE *PLUNGER*. (From a photograph of a drawing belonging to the John P. Holland Co.), ... 545

THE HARBOR OF RIO JANEIRO, SHOWING THE FRIGATE *SAVANNAH* STRUCK BY A SQUALL, JULY 5, 1856. (From a lithograph), ... 549

THE STERN AND PROPELLER OF THE *NIPSIC* AFTER THE SAMOAN HURRICANE. (From a photograph), ... 551

THE HARBOR AFTER THE SAMOAN HURRICANE. (From a photograph), ... 553

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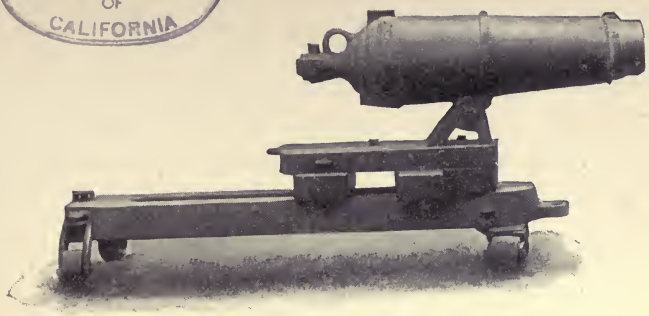


A Thirty-two-pound Carronade from the *Constitution*.

THE HISTORY OF OUR NAVY

CHAPTER I

THE STATE OF THE NAVY IN 1859

A BRIEF STORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WARSHIP THAT WAS PROPELLED BY BOTH SAILS AND STEAM—THE REMARKABLE FLOATING BATTERY OF 1814—BARRON'S IDEA OF A RAM—THE STEVENS FLOATING BATTERY—ERICSSON'S SCREW PROPELLER—STOCKTON AND THE FIRST SCREW WARSHIP—EXPERIMENTS WITH GREAT GUNS—DISCOVERIES OF BOMFORD AND RODMAN—PRACTICAL WORK BY DAHLGREN—A COMPARISON OF YANKEE FRIGATES WITH A CLASS OF BRITISH SHIPS "AVOWEDLY BUILT TO COPE" WITH THEM—THE CONDITION OF THE *PERSONNEL*.

FROM the point of view of a naval seaman it was a far cry from the first war in defence of the nation's life to the last one—so far, indeed, that all the progress made in the construction of ships of war from the time when men first went afloat to fight, down to the war of the Revolution, had not equalled that made

in the eighty odd years that elapsed between, say, the battle of Lake Champlain, which was the most important battle afloat in the Revolution, and that of Hampton Roads, which was first in the Civil War.

Consider the forces that Arnold mustered against the whelming odds under the ambitious Carleton. Though two of the vessels were dignified with the name of schooner and one was called a sloop, the flagship of the squadron was a galley managed by means of oars, and the fleet as a whole, including the *Royal Savage*, was inferior to an equal number of the galleys with which the Romans, in the days of Carthage, held sway over the Mediterranean.

And then consider the ships that in 1860 graced the register of the American navy—ships that with the aid of steam could hold their own against wind and tide, and that carried guns of so large a calibre that any but the largest from Arnold's fleet might have been shoved down their throats after the trunnions were knocked off. Arnold in his flagship, the galley *Congress*, had eight guns of which the bore was about three and a half inches in diameter, and the shot weighed six pounds. But when the Civil War came, the *Minnesota* was armed with forty-two guns of a nine-inch calibre and one of eleven inches, besides four

rifles that threw elongated projectiles weighing 100 pounds and one rifle with a projectile weighing 150. Arnold's *Congress* could throw at a broadside twenty-four pounds of metal over an effective range of perhaps 300 yards; the *Minnesota* could throw 1,861 pounds over an effective range of 1,600 yards.

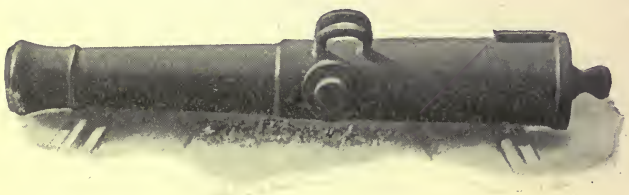
The *Minnesota* as a Receiving Ship.
From a photograph by Rau.

And a still more wondrous advance was in the minds of men; it was at hand—an advance to a point where steel forts were to be sent afloat in place of the ships that were in 1859 the pride of naval seamen.

Remarkable as it seems to the present-day student of naval history, the changes in naval ships that produced the *Minnesota* before the year 1859—even the changes that gave us the steel fort afloat—were foreshadowed in 1813 when the immortal Fulton made plans for a ship of war that should not only be propelled by steam, but should be as impregnable to the

guns of that day as were the ironclads of 1862 to the guns of their day.

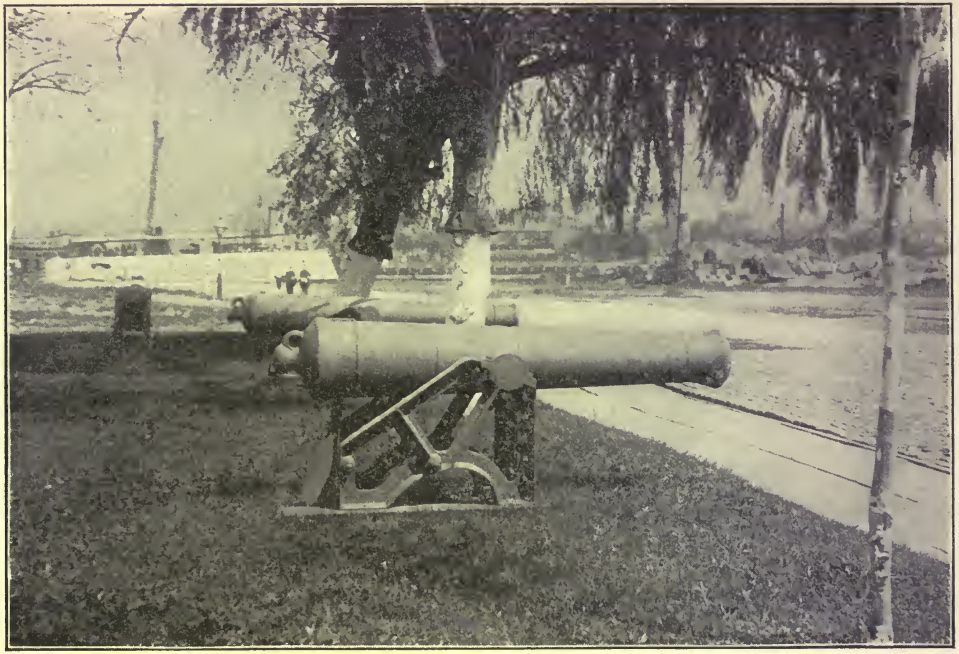
Although this ship was designed in 1813, she was not sent afloat until October 29, 1814, and even then, although swifter and more convenient than Fulton had promised that she should be—although she was the very craft that on a smooth-water day could meet and destroy the insolent blockading squadron then off Sandy Hook—she was not put into



A Loop-pattern Gun of 1836—a Type which Runs back over 100 Years.

commission immediately, and the war came to an end before there was opportunity to show what steam might do for the sea power of a nation.

But because this was the first steam warship the world ever saw, and because, when sent on trial trips, she more than fulfilled every promise of her designer, it is worth while giving a full description of her. Her length was 150 feet; breadth, 56 feet; depth, 20 feet; water-wheel, 16 feet diameter; length of bucket, 14 feet; dip, 4 feet; engine, 48-inch cylinder, 5-feet

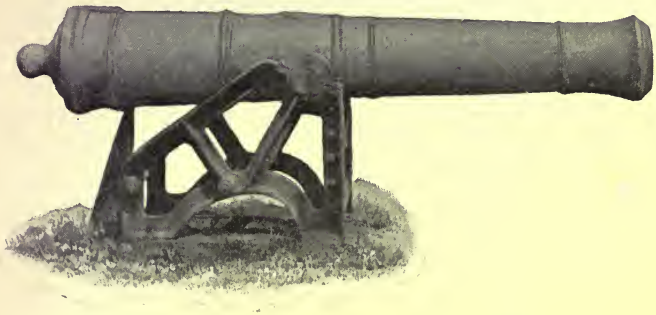


A Thirty-two-pounder from the Captured *Macedonian*—now at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

From a photograph.

stroke; boiler, length, 22 feet; breadth, 12 feet; and depth, 8 feet; tonnage, 2,475. She was the largest steamer by many hundreds of tons that had been built at the date of her launch. The commissioners appointed to examine her, in their report say:

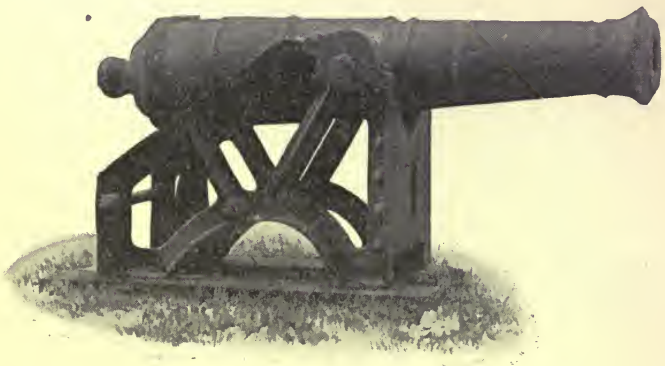
"She is a structure resting upon two boats, keels separated from end to end by a canal fifteen feet wide and sixty-six feet long. One



A Thirty-two-pounder from the Captured *Macedonian*.

boat contains the caldrons of copper to prepare her steam. The vast cylinder of iron, with its piston, levers, and wheels, occupies a part of its fellow; the great water-wheel revolves in the space between them; the main or gun-deck supporting her armament is protected by a bulwark four feet ten inches thick, of solid timber. This is pierced by thirty port-holes, to enable as many 32-pounders to fire red-hot balls; her upper or spar deck, upon which

several thousand men might parade, is encompassed by a bulwark which affords safe quarters. She is rigged with two short masts, each of which supports a large lateen yard and sails. She has two bowsprits and jibs and four rudders, two at each extremity of the boat; so that she can be steered with either end foremost. Her machinery is calculated for the



Old Cast-iron Thirty-two-pounder (Believed to be Spanish).

addition of an engine which will discharge an immense column of water, which it is intended to throw upon the decks and all through the ports of an enemy. If, in addition to all this, we suppose her to be furnished, according to Mr. Fulton's intention, with 100-pounder columbiads, two suspended from each bow, so as to discharge a ball of that size into an enemy's ship ten or twelve feet below the water-line, it must be allowed that she has the appearance

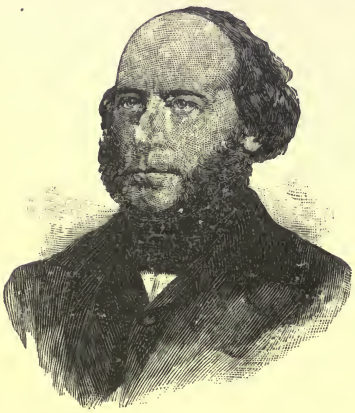
at least of being the most formidable engine of warfare that human ingenuity has contrived."

Formidable she certainly was, but no war came to demonstrate her powers, and she lay in the Brooklyn Navy Yard as a receiving-ship until the 4th of June, 1829, when her magazine was fired, presumably by a drunken member of the crew, and she was blown to pieces.

Robert L. Stevens, of Hoboken, in 1832, conceived the idea of an ironclad ship that was to be 250 feet long and twenty-eight wide—something lean and eager in pursuit and yet shot-proof. It was an idea that cost him and his family nearly $2,000,000 before he was done with it; but nothing came of it, save as it kept the restless inventors of the world thinking on the subject of swift, impregnable ships of war. Mr. Clinton Roosevelt, of New York, proposed to build a steamer that should be sharp at both ends, "plating them with polished iron armor, with high bulwarks, and a sharp roof plated in like manner, with the design of glancing the balls. The means of offense are a torpedo, made to lower on nearing an enemy, and driven by a mortar into the enemy's side under water, where, by a fusee, it will explode." The idea of polishing the armor to make it slippery seems amusing now; but the fact is that even as late as

1862 the armor of vessels in the Civil War was greased to make the projectiles glance off. Of course, the grease was of no use.

It is worth noting that it was in 1836 that John Ericsson patented in England his screw propeller. A model boat forty-five feet long, which he named, for the American consul at Liverpool, the *Francis B. Ogden*, attained in 1837 a speed of ten miles an hour. The Lords of the Admiralty took a trip in this boat, and the opinion of Sir William Symonds, who spoke for the others, is worth giving as showing how thick-skulled prejudice operates to retard naval progress. He said: "Even if the propeller had the power of propelling a vessel, it would be found altogether useless in practice, because the power being applied in the stern, it would be absolutely impossible to make the vessel steer."



John Ericsson.

However, Capt. Robert F. Stockton made a trip on the *Ogden*, and fortunately Stockton was at once a man of wealth and of common

sense. Being convinced of the value of the invention, he induced Ericsson to leave England for the United States in the year 1839, and that was, in a way, one of the most interesting events in the history of the American republic.

Meantime, however, a steamer to replace the old *Demologos*, Fulton's first war steamer, had been launched in 1837. Practically the *Fulton 2d*, as she was called, was a sloop-of-war—a ship of one deck of guns, propelled by paddle-wheels. She was broad and shallow in model, being 180 feet long by thirty-five wide and thirteen deep. She had horizontal engines lying on her upper deck. Her paddle-wheels were twenty-two feet in diameter, towering high above the deck, and her boilers were made of copper. However, she carried eight long forty-twos and a long twenty-four—a right powerful set of guns for that day, and she behaved so well that Capt. Mathew C. Perry, who was assigned to her, expressed the opinion that a time would come when sails, as a means of propelling a man-of-war, would become obsolete. However, it must be said that this remark made almost every one who heard of it, and especially the other officers of the navy, think that Perry was a "visionary."

It was in 1839 that Perry risked his reputation by an expression of opinion—about the

time that Ericsson reached the United States. Backed by Stockton, Ericsson planned a man-of-war that should be driven through the water by a submerged screw at the stern. The idea of a ship being driven by machinery that was placed wholly below the water-line, and so out of danger from an enemy's shot, was of a kind to appeal even to a backwoods congressman, and an appropriation was obtained. In 1843 the ship was launched under the name of *Princeton*, and she was in a variety of ways vastly superior to anything built before her. She was 164 feet long by thirty wide and twenty-one deep, and with 200 tons of coal and all supplies on board, she had a draft of nearly twenty feet.

Among other features, it appears that she was the first warship fitted to burn anthracite coal, thus avoiding the dense volumes of black smoke which revealed all foreign war-steamers. She was the first to carry telescopic funnels that could be lowered to the level of the rail out of the way of sails, and the first to use blowers to force the draft in the furnaces. She was also the first to couple the screw directly to the engine instead having cog-wheels intervene.

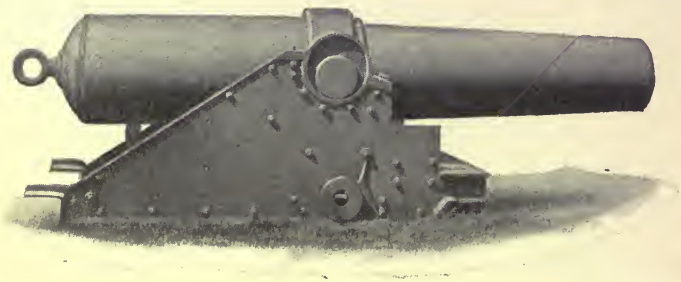
Her armament was also peculiar, for she was fitted with two long wrought-iron guns that threw balls about a foot in diameter, weighing

The *Great Western*—One of the First Steamships to Cross the Atlantic Ocean.

After an old painting.

225 pounds—guns that, when fired at a target at a range of 560 yards, pierced fifty-seven inches of solid oak timber.

And there was one other peculiarity to which Stockton, who commanded her, called attention with pride: "To economise room, and that the ship may be better ventilated, curtains of



Twelve-inch Wrought-iron Gun—the Mate to the "Peacemaker," which Burst on the *Princeton*.

(The carriage is a mortar carriage from Porter's mortar fleet at New Orleans.)

From a photograph of the original at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

American manufactured linen are substituted for the usual wooden bulkheads."

As a steamship the *Princeton* was a very great success, but the art of forging was not then sufficiently advanced to warrant the manufacture of any but cast-iron guns. On a trial trip made from Washington in 1844, one of the great forged guns burst, killing and wounding a number of gentlemen, including the Secretary of State and the Secretary of

the Navy, with several ladies who had been invited to go on the trip. Stockton had boasted that "the numerical force of other navies, so long boasted, may be set at naught, and the rights of the smallest as well as the greatest nations may once more be respected." And the boast would have been almost justi-

U. S. Ironclad Steamship *Roanoke.*
(The first turreted frigate in the United States, 1863.)
From an old lithograph.

fied but for the failure of the wrought-iron gun.

However, the success of the *Princeton* as a ship was so pronounced that money was appropriated from time to time for others designed much as she was until the navy had six screw frigates—the *Niagara*, the *Roanoke*, the *Colorado*, the *Merrimac*, the *Minnesota*, and the

Wabash; six screw sloops of the first class—the *San Jacinto*, the *Lancaster*, the *Brooklyn*, the *Hartford*, the *Richmond*, and the *Pensacola*, besides eight screw sloops of the second class, of which the *Iroquois* was a type, and five of the third class, of which the *Mohawk* was a

U. S. Frigate *Pensacola* off Alexandria.
From a photograph taken in 1865.

type. There was also a screw frigate on the stocks at the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, dock-yard. The guns that these ships carried, when compared with those of the war of the Revolution, were quite as interesting as the ships themselves.

The prejudices in the way of improving great guns were not only strong, but they were founded on experiences that were seemingly convincing beyond peradventure. For instance, under Charles V a cannon was cast at Genoa that was fifty-eight calibres long; that is, it was of about six inches diameter of bore and twenty-nine feet long. When fired, its ball of thirty-six pounds weight had less range than an ordinary twelve-pounder. So they cut off four feet of the gun and found that its range increased. Cutting off three feet more still further increased the range, as did another cut of six inches—"which shows," says Simpson's text-book on gunnery, printed in 1862, "that there is for each piece a maximum length which should not be exceeded." So that dictum stood in the way of arriving at the design of a gun like the modern rifle, that would really give the greatest possible range to a projectile. Then, the distribution of the metal in the cannon with which Arnold fought on Lake Champlain seems now ridiculous. One must needs see a picture of the old gun beside one of the guns as developed just previous to the Civil War to realize the difference; but it may be said that, with the bell-shaped muzzle and the "rings" and "reinforces," the old gun in outline had as many ups and downs as some step-ladders, while the cast-iron weapon of 1860

was as smooth and symmetrical as the hull of a Yankee clipper.

A curious series of experiments, made by Colonel Bomford of the United States Ordnance Department, told for the first time where the greatest strain was exerted on the bore of a gun, and gave some idea of the relative strain elsewhere along the bore. Taking an old cannon, he drilled a hole from the side near the

A Twelve-pound Bronze Howitzer—the First One Made in the United States.

From a photograph of the original at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

muzzle directly into the bore and inserted a pistol-barrel. Then he put a bullet into the pistol-barrel, and after loading the cannon in the ordinary way, he fired it. Of course, as the cannon-ball was driven from the big gun the powder gas behind it drove the pistol-ball from the pistol-barrel. The colonel measured the velocity of the pistol-ball and made a note of it. Then he drilled another hole in the cannon some inches farther from the muzzle, and repeated

the experiment. The force exerted on the pistol-ball was slightly greater there. By drilling other holes he learned approximately the pressure all along the bore. It appeared that the greatest pressure was directly over the shot when it was rammed home against the powder. From there the pressure decreased rapidly, being only about half as much when the ball had travelled four times its own diameter from its original resting place.

A Dahlgren Gun.

Captain Rodman of the Ordnance Department, put a piston in place of Bomford's pistol-barrel and let the piston punch into a piece of copper, and then determined the pressure on the piston by forcing the same kind of a piston into the same kind of a piece of copper by a known weight. "Although not an accurate process," it was good enough, and with the figures obtained by it before him, Lieut. John Dahlgren, of the United States navy, designed the gun of smooth outline that by its splendid

success in the hands of both forces, during the Civil War, made him famous. The greatest thickness of metal was placed around the greatest strain, and a proper thickness at every inch of length of the bore.

It was not alone, however, in putting the metal where it would prove most serviceable that Dahlgren made his gun efficient. He was a metallurgist, and was careful to improve the quality of iron used.

Meantime Captain Rodman had proposed to cast cannon hollow and cool them from the interior, instead of casting a solid log of iron and boring it out on the old plan. Although the first experiments did not show any especial improvement in the strength of a gun so cast, the method was eventually found to be the best.

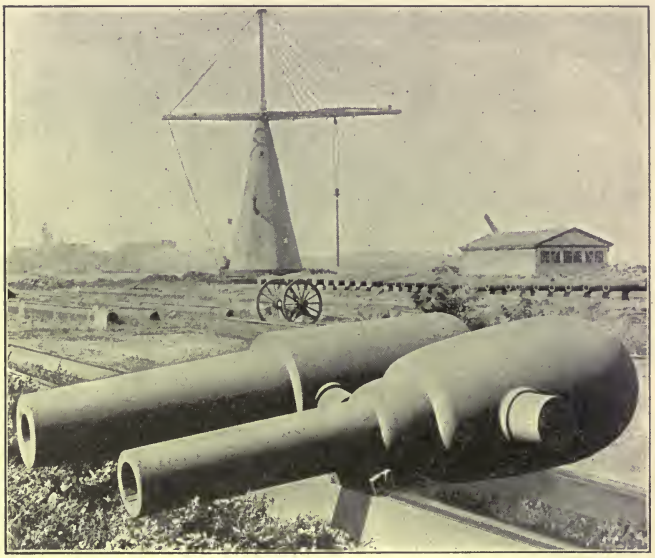
With Dahlgren's model a gun of eleven inches of diameter of bore was cast in 1852. It was fired 500 times with shells and 655 times with solid shot that weighed 170 pounds, the service charge of powder being fifteen pounds. The gun was not seriously injured or worn even by the work. That settled the status of the Dahlgren guns, and from that time on they were furnished with reasonable rapidity to the new steam warships of the navy.

Meantime rifled cannon made of cast iron reinforced over the breech by a wrought-iron

jacket that was shrunk on had been introduced into the American navy. They varied from thirty-pounders up to 100-pounders, and, except for the smaller calibres, were in many cases more dangerous for their crews than for the enemy. It must be told also that a cast-iron rifle known as the Brooke, because designed by Commander John M. Brooke, of the Confederate navy, was produced in Richmond that was better than the Parrott. It was strengthened in its early service days by a series of wrought-iron bands two inches thick and six wide, that were shrunk on over the breech. Later a second series of bands was shrunk on over the first, breaking joints with them, of course, and so a very good 150-pounder was produced.

Meantime one Dahlgren smooth-bore, with a bore fifteen inches in diameter, had been successfully made, and the shells for all the Dahlgren guns were provided with fuzes that could be set to explode just about where and when the gunner wished to have them do so. But whether the damage to be done by a fifteen-inch round shot smashing its way through a ship's side would be greater or less than that of a rifle projectile boring its way through was a question that had not been decided. It was granted that the rifle had the longer range—with a reasonable elevation a rifle would carry

three miles, maybe four, and do some damage when the projectile arrived, while the effective range of the smooth-bore was, say, 1,500 or 1,600 yards, though gunners made efforts, when the time came, to run in to a range of 600 yards



Two Blakely Guns at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

or less instead. But, on the whole, it was the belief among American naval officers before the Civil War that the big Dahlgren smooth-bore was the best gun afloat.

So it came to pass that the newest and best ships of the navy were armed with the Dahlgren gun. The *Merrimac*, which was not the

best of the frigates, carried twenty-four nine-inch guns on her gun deck, with fourteen eight-inch and two ten-inch pivots on her spar deck. She could throw 864 pounds of metal from her gun-deck broadside, 360 pounds from her broadside of eight-inch guns, and 200 from her ten-inch, both of which could be fired over either rail.

Mr. Hans Busk, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, was moved to write on page 104, in his "Navies of the World," that "the navy of the United States has a tolerably imposing appearance upon paper," but he concludes that a British frigate of the *Diadem* class, "avowedly built to cope with those of the description of the *Merrimac*, etc., would speedily capture her great ungainly enemy." To fully appreciate this remarkable statement it must be known that the *Diadem* could fire at a broadside ten ten-inch shells, weighing in the aggregate 820 pounds, five thirty-two-pound solid shot, and two sixty-eight-pound solid shot—in all 1,116 pounds of shot to 1,424 pounds that the *Merrimac's* broadside weighed.

The frigate *Minnesota* carried, soon after the Civil War broke out, no less than forty-two nine-inch Dahlgrens, one of eleven inches, four 100-pounder rifles, and one 150-pounder rifle. She could throw 1,861 pounds of metal at a broadside. Moreover, it was not a mere mat-

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ter of weight of metal. The diameter of the American projectiles was a matter for serious consideration by the enemy, and so was the ability of the gun to stand service. The best English gun could stand a charge of twelve pounds of powder, and the best American fifteen. There was a vast difference in the smashing effect of an eleven-inch shell driven by fifteen pounds of powder and a ten-inch shell driven by twelve.

All this seems worth telling only because it shows that the ideas of armament which prevailed among the English and the Americans before the War of 1812 were still held by the two nations in 1859. Indeed, the disproportion between the *Minnesota's* armament and that of the *Diadem* was very much greater than that between the *United States* and the *Macedonian.*

In short, all things considered, the American people had just the fleet they needed for that day to resist foreign aggression.

But while the patriot holds up his head in pride at the thought of the ships of 1859, he hesitates and stammers when he comes to tell of the men—of the *personnel* of the navy. It was a far cry from the sailing ships of the old days to the steam frigates of the later, but it was a farther one, and a cry over the shoulder at that, from the men who swept the seas

under the once-despised gridiron flag to those who carried the American naval commissions in 1859. It was not that courage and enterprise were dead, or knowledge and skill were lacking. There were, of course, men a-plenty who were brave and tactful and energetic and learned—plenty who were to become during the war men of the widest fame. But "long years of peace, the unbroken course of seniority promotion, and the absence of any provision for retirement," had served the officers as lying in ordinary served white oak ships. Nearly all of the captains were more than sixty years old. The commanders at the head of the list were between fifty-eight and sixty years of age. There were lieutenants more than fifty years old, and only a few of the lieutenants had known the responsibility of a separate command.

And then, "as a matter of fact," as Professor J. R. Soley says in his work on "The Blockade and the Cruisers," "it was no uncommon thing, in 1861, to find officers in command of steamers who had never served in steamers before, and *who were far more anxious about their boilers* than about their enemy."

But that was not all nor the worst that can be said of the *personnel* of that day, for a sentiment—a faith—had developed and spread to a degree that now seems almost incredible,

under which men who had made oath that they would always defend the Constitution of the United States came to believe that they were under obligations to draw their swords against the flag they had sworn to defend—the flag which some of them had defended with magnificent courage.

That the politicians should have been secessionists is not at all a matter of wonder. It was entirely natural. But how a Tatnall, the story of whose bravery at Vera Cruz still thrills the heart; how an Ingraham, whose quick defence of the rights of a half-fledged American in the Mediterranean is still an example to all naval officers—how these men could have placed the call of friends and neighbors and a State above the obligation of their oath to support the Constitution, is something that is now incomprehensible.

It must be granted that they were of good conscience. There was not a sordid thought in their minds—not one. Indeed, most of them felt that they were making the greatest of sacrifices for the sake of principle. But, if the writer may express his thoughts without offence, no patriot can now read of the glorious achievements of the men who in other days fought afloat for the honor of the nation, without feeling inexpressibly shocked at the thought that any man of the navy should have

been found willing under any circumstances to strike at the gridiron flag.

There is not a little interest in considering the actual numbers of the men who left the navy to take part with the Southern States. Before South Carolina passed her ordinance of secession there were 1,563 officers, commissioned and warrant, on the naval register. Of these, 677 were from Southern States; but 350 of these Southern-born men remained true to the flag, while 321 resigned to enter the Confederate navy. Of thirty-eight Southern captains, sixteen resigned; of sixty-four Southern commanders, thirty-four resigned; of 151 Southern lieutenants, seventy-six resigned; of 128 Southern acting midshipmen, 106 resigned.

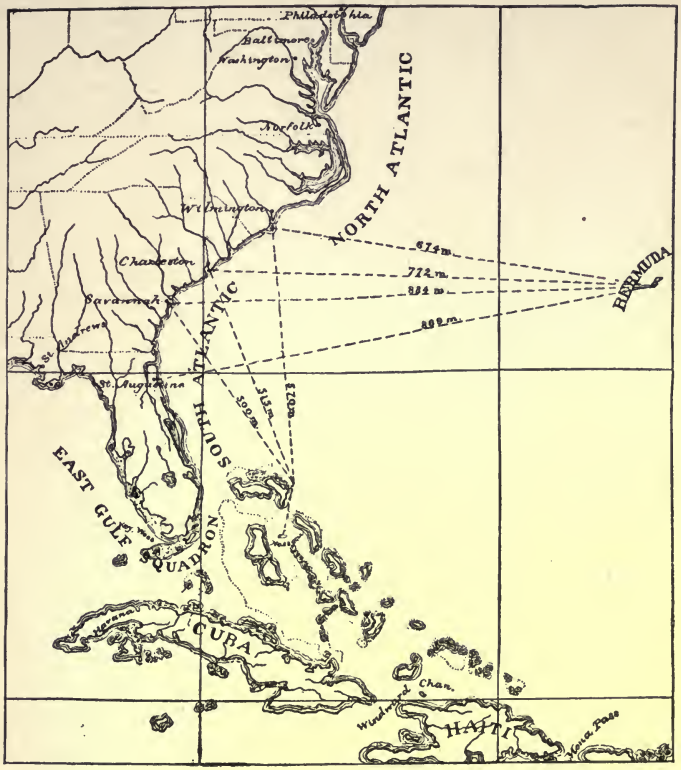
And that is to say that so demoralized had the navy become under the influence of quarrelling politicians that more than one-fifth of all the officers were ready to forsake their allegiance.

CHAPTER II

BLOCKADING THE SOUTHERN PORTS

LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION—IT WAS SOMETHING OF A TASK TO CLOSE 185 INLETS AND PATROL 11,953 MILES OF SEA-BEACHES, ESPECIALLY WITH THE FORCE OF SHIPS IN HAND—ONE MERCHANT'S NOTION OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THIRTY SAILING VESSELS—GATHERING AND BUILDING BLOCKADERS—INCENTIVES AND FAVORING CIRCUMSTANCES FOR BLOCKADE-RUNNERS—WHEN PERJURY FAILED AND UNCLE SAM WAS ABLE TO STRIKE WITHOUT WAITING FOR ACT OF CONGRESS—WHEN BLOCKADE-RUNNERS CAME TO NEW YORK AND YANKEE SMOKELESS COAL WAS IN DEMAND.

THE story of the actual work done by the navy in this last war for the preservation of the life of the nation begins when a blockade of the ports of the seceded States was ordered. Two proclamations were issued to provide for this measure. The first was issued on April 19, 1861, which, as the reader will remember, was six days after the capture of Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor, by the secessionists. It covered all the ports of the South except those of Virginia and Texas; but on the 27th of the same month, these two States having also joined the Confederacy, their ports were included by a second proclamation. Because,



The Blockaded Coast.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

from a naval point of view, that was the most important proclamation issued by a President of the United States since the War of 1812, its words shall be given literally.

"Now therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States . . . have further deemed it advisable to set on foot a blockade

of the ports within the States aforesaid, in pursuance of the laws of the United States and of the Law of Nations in such case provided. For this purpose a competent force will be posted so as to prevent entrance and exit of vessels from the ports aforesaid. If, therefore, with a view to violate such blockade, a vessel shall approach or shall attempt to leave any of the said ports, she will be duly warned by the commander of one of the blockading vessels, who will endorse on her register the fact and date of such warning, and if the same vessel shall again attempt to enter or leave the blockaded port, she will be captured, and sent to the nearest convenient port for such proceedings against her, and her cargo as prize, as may be deemed advisable."

It is worth while considering in advance some of the facts relating to the task that was thus set for the navy. The coast line invested extended from Alexandria, Virginia, to the borders of Mexico on the Rio Grande. The continental line was 3,549 miles long. The coast or shore line, including bays and similar openings, was 6,789 miles long; and if to this be added the shore lines of the islands which were included in the blockade and which were necessarily watched by the blockading fleet, the entire length of beaches under guard was exactly 11,953 miles.

The South Carolina islands, as described by Jedidiah Morse, "are surrounded by navigable creeks, between which and the mainland is a large extent of salt marsh fronting the whole State, not less on an average than 4 or 5 miles in breadth, intersected with creeks in various directions, admitting through the whole an inland navigation between the islands and mainland from the north-east to the south-east corners of the State. The east sides of these islands are for the most part clean, hard, sandy beaches, exposed to the wash of the ocean. Between these islands are the entrances of the rivers from the interior country, winding through the low salt marshes and delivering their waters into the sounds, which form capacious harbours of from 3 to 8 miles over, and which communicate with each other by parallel salt creeks." And that will apply to the whole coast.

More than that, in this length of shore line were found 185 harbor and river openings that might be used for the purposes of commerce with the Confederate States. It is also an important fact that these harbor openings were, in almost every instance, too shoal for the ordinary ocean-going cargo ships of that day. If too shoal for a merchantman, they were so for a man-o'-war, and the more intricate and variable the channels the better adapted they

were to the purposes of a trade that was to be carried on in spite of the blockade.

To close these 185 harbor openings the government had, on the day the proclamation was issued, twenty-six steamers and sixteen sailing ships in commission. But let not the uninformed reader suppose that such a great fleet as this was at once started off on that duty. There were in the home squadron but five sailing ships and seven steamers, while of these a number were at sea *en route* from nearby foreign to American ports, and of those actually in the United States harbors but three—the *Pawnee*, the *Mohawk*, and the *Crusader*—were in Northern waters. To close 185 harbor openings the Secretary of the Navy had for the moment just three steamers, the rest of the commissioned fleet being either in the ports of the Southern States or scattered the wide world over. And that is to say, there was for the moment no force adequate to blockade efficiently even the one Southern port of Charleston.

The navy register showed, however, in addition to the forty-two ships in commission, twenty-seven that were lying at the navy yards in ordinary but fit for service. The government had thirty-nine steamers and thirty-four sailing ships that might be brought together in the course of a few months to enforce the

Map Showing Position of
UNITED STATES SHIPS OF WAR
in Commission March 4, 1861.

NOTE.— There is no log book for the John Adams (No.18) for the year 1861, but it is known that this ship was at Manilla, January 14, 1861, and at Hong Kong, May 1, 1861.

The Levant (No.38) was lost in the Pacific in the fall of 1860.

M.-N.CO

blockade of the 185 harbors of the South and keep contraband trade clear of the eleven thousand and odd miles of Southern sea-beaches.

It is worth noting here that when the Navy Department was first considering its lack of ships for the purpose of enforcing the blockade, a consultation was had with a number of the most eminent ship-owners of New York. The leader of these eminent ship-owners, after considering the subject carefully, said to Secretary Welles that thirty sailing vessels would have to be purchased before an actual blockade of the ports could be completed. As a matter of fact, over 600 ships were employed at the end, and even then some blockaders got through.

Gideon Welles.

From a photograph.

But it was not alone in a lack of ships that the government was embarrassed. It was necessary to find officers and crews for the ships that were not in commission. Hundreds

of men were needed to man even one of the five screw frigates, and yet to man the whole twenty-seven ships not in commission there were, on March 4, 1861, "only 207 men in all the ports and receiving ships on the Atlantic coast." "It is a striking illustration of the improvidence of naval legislation and administration that in a country of thirty millions of people only a couple of hundred were at the disposal of the Navy Department."

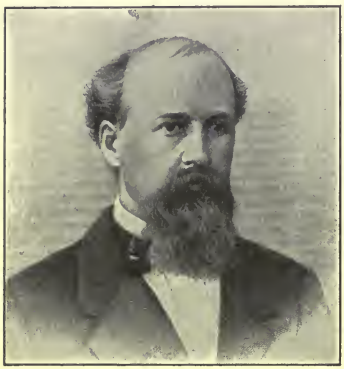
And as for the officers, as has been already shown, when the need of the nation was greatest, a fifth of them drew swords against the flag instead of defending it.

To still further hamper the work of the Navy Department, Congress was very slow to learn that a vast naval force was needed. The fact that the South had no navy and no merchant marine of its own, seemed, in the minds of the Congressmen, to make it wholly unnecessary to spend money on fighting ships. Indeed, a Navy Department has rarely been in a more distressful condition than was that under Mr. Gideon Welles in the first six months or so of the administration of President Lincoln.

However, a beginning was made. Perhaps the first step of importance in fitting the navy for war was the appointment of Mr. Gustavus V. Fox as assistant to Mr. Welles, for Fox

had been a naval lieutenant and brought a practical knowledge of naval affairs with him when he was placed in charge of the actual war operations of the ships.

First of all, of course, was the work of getting men by a call for volunteers. The call was answered by hosts, but never by as great numbers as were needed. Captains and mates from the Northern ports and the Great Lakes were the more valuable part of this volunteer force, but so great was the need of officers that not a few men who had never been at sea received appointments. The youngsters at the Naval Academy who had had one year's instruction, or more, were taken at once into the service. They were mere boys, but they had learned something of warships, and some of them made names that will not be easily forgotten.



Gustavus V. Fox.

From an engraving.

The next effort after the call for men was to issue a call for ships. The department strove to buy "everything afloat that could be

made of service," and where owners would not sell, to charter the ships. At first the ships were purchased by the department direct or by naval officers. Altogether, twelve steamers had been purchased and nine chartered by July 1, 1861; and it is worth recording that, because greed was a stronger passion than love of country, the prices charged were outrageously high. Afterwards a business man was appointed to the task of buying ships, and somewhat better rates were then obtained, while a board of naval officers inspected the ships to decide on their fitness and the alterations needed to make them serviceable.

It was a heterogeneous collection, a nautical curiosity shop, that they got together—deep-water ships, inland-water steamers, ferryboats, and harbor tugs. The inspecting officers were compelled by stress of need to accept about everything that would float and carry a gun. And, singular as it may seem at first thought to those who in these days ride on them, the double-ended ferryboats made very successful naval ships. It was the Fulton ferryboat *Somerset* that captured the blockade-runner *Circassian* off Havana—a prize that yielded $315,371.39 to her captors. Nor was that her only service. Being well built to stand the hard knocks of their ordinary service, the ferryboats were easily fitted with heavy guns and

served well in battering down alongshore forts.

By the 1st of December, 1861, the government had purchased 137 vessels, of which, however, fifty-eight were sailing vessels; and it may as well be told here as elsewhere that 418 vessels were purchased during the war, of which 313 were steamers.

Meantime the department started the work of building ships. Congress authorized seven sloops-of-war, and the department laid down eight, of which four were built to the lines of the sloops of 1858 in order to save time; and it is worth noting that the *Kearsarge* was among the four. The eight were begun immediately, and six more were laid down before the end of the year.

Without waiting for an appropriation, the department contracted with private shipyards for the building of twenty-three heavily armed screw gunboats. And this contract is worth more space than the mere statement of the fact, for it draws attention to the importance of the private shipbuilder as a factor in the sea power of a nation. Even in the War of 1812, when wooden sailing ships were the sole evidence of sea power, the private shipbuilder was of essential importance. It was a private shipbuilder from New York, Mr. Noah Brown, who sent Perry's victorious squadron afloat on

Lake Erie, and it was the private shipbuilder who gave the Americans the supremacy that they enjoyed from time to time on Lake Ontario. Without private yards amply equipped for the construction of the best warships afloat, no nation can have a sea power adequate for the protection of its honor and the preservation of peace.

Garrett J. Pendergrast.

These twenty-three gunboats mounted from four to five guns each, of which one was an eleven-inch smooth-bore. They were wooden boats, of course, and they were known as the ninety-day fleet because some of them were in commission within three months from the signing of the contract.

The fact that they were so quickly built is also worth considering in connection with the fact that ships relatively as efficient as they were could not now be built in less than a

year. The day of a ninety-day fleet passed when steel was substituted for wood.

The first point actually blockaded was Hampton Roads. Flag Officer G. J. Pendergrast established the blockade there, and issued the following proclamation on April 30, 1861:

"*To all whom it may concern:*

"I hereby call attention to the Proclamation of his Excellency Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, under date of the 27th April, 1861, for an efficient blockade of the ports of Virginia and North Carolina, and warn all persons interested that I have a sufficient naval force there for the purpose of carrying out that Proclamation.

"All vessels passing the Capes of Virginia, coming from a distance and ignorant of the Proclamation, will be warned off, and those passing Fortress Monroe will be required to anchor under the guns of the fort, and subject themselves to an examination.

"United States' Flag-ship *Cumberland*, off
"Fortress Monroe, Virginia, April 30, 1861.
(Signed) "G. J. PENDERGRAST,
"*Commanding Home Squadron.*"

This proclamation is worth careful perusal for two reasons: The first reason is that it contained an untrue statement. Instead of having "sufficient naval force" "for an efficient blockade of the ports of Virginia and North Carolina," he had barely enough for

Virginia alone. Wilmington was a most important harbor of the South; it eventually became the favorite with blockade-runners, but there was not a ship ready to close it for many weeks after this proclamation was issued.

More important still is the second reason for reading the proclamation carefully—the fact that it was issued at the behest of the Navy Department, and illustrates clearly the department's idea of a blockade at that time. It is necessary to say here that, owing to the excitement of the times, the government was making a very grave error—it was trying to establish a "paper blockade." That is to say, there was a determined effort made to interdict trade where there was no blockade *de facto*—not a ship, or a rowboat even, stationed to close the port. And this was a most remarkable undertaking, because the "free trade" for which the War of 1812 was waged was the freedom to trade in any belligerent port not actually closed by the presence of a warship. The government was sacrificing a great principle for the sake of a temporary advantage.

This was not due to the mistake of a naval officer. It was the deliberate action of the administration, and it is not unlikely that it will come back, some time, to plague us when

we are the neutral nation seeking for trade in a belligerent port.

Proof of the fact that the whole Cabinet was involved is found in the correspondence of Mr. Seward relating to the blockade off Charleston. The *Niagara* had arrived home from Japan on April 24th, and was sent to blockade Charleston as soon as possible, arriving off the bar on May 11th. She remained there four days only, and then went away in search of a ship that was said to be bringing arms from Belgium to a port further south, and there was no warship off that harbor until May 28th (some accounts say the 29th), when the *Minnesota* came to take the *Niagara's* place. The *Harriet Lane*, a revenue cutter, used as a warship, did lie off the harbor on the 19th, but for thirteen days Charleston was entirely uncovered.

On May 22, 1861, Lord Lyons, the British minister at Washington, in the interest of British ships at Charleston, called the attention of Mr. Seward to the fact that the *Niagara* had left Charleston on the 15th and that the harbor was thereby opened. Replying to this, Mr. Seward wrote, along with other things, the following:

"The blockade of the port of Charleston has been neither abandoned, relinquished, nor remitted, as the letter of Her Britannic Maj-

esty's Consul would lead you to infer. We are informed that the *Niagara* was replaced by the steamer *Harriet Lane*, but that, owing to some accident, the latter vessel failed to reach the station as ordered until a day or two after the *Niagara* had left.

"I hasten, however, to express the dissent of this Government from the position which seems to be assumed by your note, that that temporary absence impairs the blockade and renders necessary a new notice of its existence. This Government holds that the blockade took effect at Charleston on the 11th day of this month, and that it will continually be in effect until notice of its relinquishment shall be given by Proclamation of the President of the United States."

On May 13th the British ship *Perthshire* appeared off Pensacola, having heard nothing of the blockade there, but she was told that Mobile was open. So she went to Mobile, loaded cotton, and sailed on the 30th, although the port was closed on the 26th by the *Powhatan*. She was captured at sea on June 9th, by the *Massachusetts*, but released by the flagship *Niagara*, whose captain "considered the capture illegal, as, by order of the Department, no neutral vessel not having on board contraband of war was to be detained or captured unless attempting to leave or enter a blockaded port

after the notification of blockade had been indorsed on her register." The owner made a claim for £200 compensation on account of the detention of his ship, which had lost twelve days of her voyage ; and the claim was allowed and paid by the government of the United States.

The United States had now to abide by the law that its navy had in 1812 established. The ship of a neutral had a right to enter any port left open by the government ships, and for several months after the President's proclamation nine-tenths of the 185 Southern harbors remained open.

This matter is of importance because of the right of neutrals in case the blockade of a port was actually abandoned or raised even for an hour. The opening of the port made it legally necessary for the blockaders to begin over again as if no blockade had existed. The neutral entering an opened port had a right to remain fifteen days, as the law was applied, after she was officially notified of the blockade, while neutrals approaching a re-blockaded port had the right to go away unmolested if they had not been notified, actually or constructively, that the new blockade existed.

New Orleans was blockaded on May 26, 1861, by the *Brooklyn*, and Galveston on June 2d by the *South Carolina*. For celerity of

movement in carrying out orders to blockade the different ports no man exceeded Lieutenant Woodhull, for within forty-eight hours after receiving orders to charter a steamer he had left Washington, obtained the *Keystone State* in the Delaware, carried her to Hampton Roads, and reported ready for duty.

On the whole, it may be said that on July 1, 1861, the magnitude of the work of blockading 185 ports and inlets began to be appreciated by the Navy Department. Moreover, the hesitation and vacillation that had characterized the early movements of the government were becoming submerged. The determination of the people of the North to preserve the American nation intact was growing, under the shame of early reverses ashore, into a mighty tide that was to be irresistible at the last. A blockade was established within the time mentioned, in which even the critical eye of British men-o'-warsmen, sent especially to examine it in the interests of British commerce, could find no flaw. When, on the 13th of July, Commodore Pendergast issued another proclamation saying Virginia and North Carolina were legally closed, he stated the fact, and from that time on the whole coast was, at worst, under guard, if not impassable. It was a blockade that was to starve the hosts fighting against the flag into abandoning their arms and re-

turning once more to the ballot-box for a redress of grievances.

This is by no means to say that the blockade was absolutely effectual. Tales of the blockade-runners are to be told further on, but some of the difficulties in the way of effecting a blockade, even when ships a-plenty were on the coast, must be considered here. Mention has already been made of the physical aspects of the coast. No more difficult coast for a blockade can be found in the world. With this in mind, let the reader recall the fact that the South in those days was about the only producer of cotton in the world, and that the sap of the long-leaved pine was converted into tar and turpentine, which were produced there in very great quantities. On the other hand, consider that the South had scarcely anything in the way of factories. The people there were dependent on commerce for their supplies of even the most common necessities of life—for household goods, for clothing, and even for some kinds of food. And as for the arms and supplies needed for a war, there was one small powder mill, but nothing more in all the South, unless, indeed, the existence of the Tredegar iron mills at Richmond might be called a gun and engine factory.

Here, then, were the conditions for commerce: The South was the chief source of

cotton and naval stores, and it was in desperate need of manufactured articles in a great variety. The blockade stopped all lawful traffic between it and the rest of the world. The cotton for the mills of the world was shut off. The mills of France and England were shut down for want of raw material, and people starved to death in England because the mills were shut down, and there was no way in which the unfortunate operators could get money for food. We can afford to recall this fact when we feel embittered by the attitude of a certain part of the English people toward us during our struggle for national life. In Lancashire, England, no less than ten million dollars had been given away by relief committees to the starving mill hands *within two years* after the war began. Moreover, the English government was not always one-sided, as will appear further on.

The price of cotton rose to a level that now seems fabulous in the markets of the world. The prices of the goods that the people of the South were accustomed to import rose as rapidly there, while munitions of war commanded any price that might be asked by one who could supply them. Here was a chance for profit such as the world had not seen since the wars of Napoleon, and greed is the steam that turns the wheels of commerce.

Just off the Southern coast lay the Bahama Islands, while the Bermudas were but a day's sail farther away. It is 674 miles from Bermuda to Wilmington, and 515 from Nassau to Charleston—three days' run, or less, in either case. Here were neutral ports to serve as a basis for the contraband trade, and thither the contraband traders flocked as the pirates of old swarmed about Jamaica.

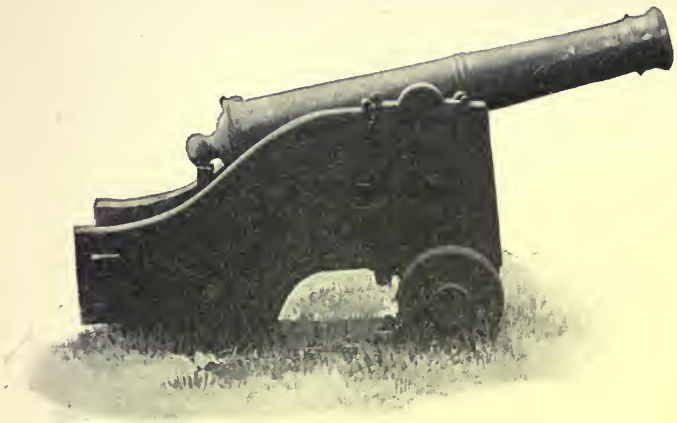
Nassau was a natural resort for the blockade runners, for its people had been wreckers—had "thanked God for a good wrack"—for time out of mind. Besides that, it was not only near by the Southern coast, but it was surrounded by a host of reefs awash, every one of which was neutral territory, and was surrounded by its marine league of neutral waters, where a blockade-runner was safe.

As the reader will remember, the blockade-running traffic was chiefly in the hands of the British, although Yankees were found not unwilling to turn a contraband dollar with one hand while they flapped the old flag in the air with the other and shouted over Union victories vociferously.

At the beginning of the contraband business the vessels were loaded in England, cleared for Bermuda or Nassau, and sent thence to the Southern destination, Charleston being the chief port. Any vessel, even a condemned

sailing schooner, was counted good enough ; in fact, worthless vessels were preferred because the loss would be less in case of failure.

The touch at the neutral port was, of course, a mere device to deceive the American government officials; but a change was soon made in that game, for the courts held to the doctrine



A Four-pound Cast-iron Gun Captured from a Blockade-runner.

of the continuity of a voyage. If the ultimate destination of the ship and cargo was Charleston, she might be lawfully captured anywhere *en route* in spite of the fact that she was cleared for a neutral port when the voyage began.

There being no appeal from this decision, the contraband dealers resorted to shipping goods from England to the neutral port off the

coast, and there unloading the goods. The papers, of course, were made out in proper form, under oath, giving the neutral port as the ultimate destination. They showed, for instance, that a house in Nassau was buying shoes, woollens, guns, gunpowder, swords, etc., sufficient to supply an army, and it was called legitimate trade. Perjury was as common in this contraband business as the drinking of wine. In fact, one cannot help quoting here the words of the favorite "Naval History of Great Britain"—the words of James where he is writing of American traders in the days of the "paper blockades" of 1812. He says:

"Every citizen of every town in the United States, to which a creek leads that can float a canoe, becomes henceforward 'a merchant'; and the grower of wheat or tobacco sends his son to a counting-house, that he may be initiated in the profitable art of falsifying ship's papers, and covering belligerent property. Here the young American learns to bolt custom-house oaths by the dozen, and to condemn a lie only when clumsily told, or when timorously or inadequately applied. After a few years of probation, he is sent on board a vessel as mate, or supercargo; and, in due time, besides fabricating fraudulent papers, and swearing to their genuineness, he learns (using a homely phrase) to humbug British officers,

and to decoy and make American citizens of British seamen."

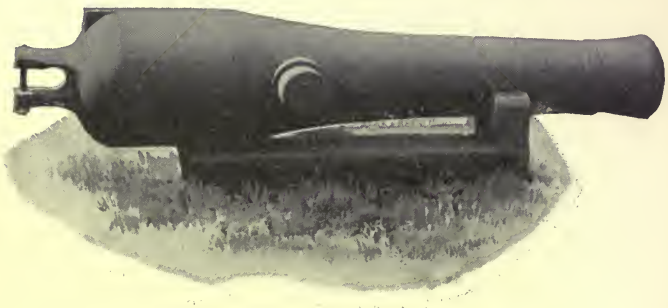
What Mr. James says of the American people as a whole, can be truthfully said in substance of the British blockade-runners. They were an infamous lot, without exception, and ever ready to sacrifice honor and risk life so long as the number of pieces of gold was large enough.

But this is not meant to apply to the Confederates engaged in running supplies through the blockaded lines. Their case was entirely different, for they were legally belligerents, and to obtain supplies was, from their point of view, a patriotic duty. So it might—so it usually did happen that a blockade-runner carried one man (the pilot) whose courage and firmness excite the heartiest approbation of every unprejudiced mind, while every other member of the crew was at heart a coward who dared not fight the blockaders in pursuit, and a sneak who would sell his soul for gold.

However, even the trick of transferring cargo at Nassau did not serve them long, for "it was held that the ships carrying on this traffic to neutral ports were confiscable, provided the ultimate destination of the cargo to a blockaded port was known to the owner."

For this "the United States were accused of sacrificing the rights of neutrals, which they

had hitherto upheld, to the interests of belligerents, and of disregarding great principles for the sake of momentary advantage." In fact, however, Lord Stowell had held where a neutral, when trading between two ports of a belligerent, had landed the cargo in a neutral port and re-shipped it on another vessel, the continuity of the voyage was not broken. Cargoes shipped in due form to Nassau and

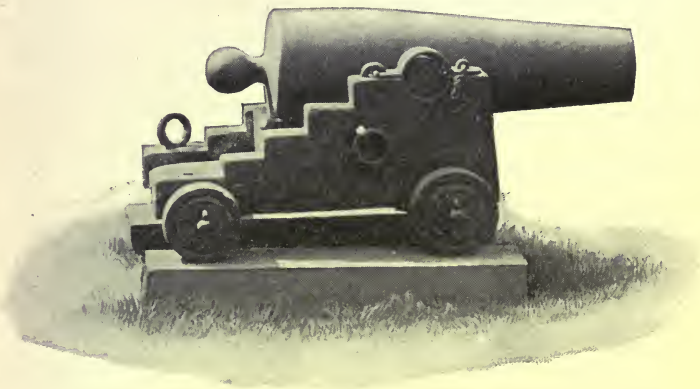


An Eighteen-pound Rifle Captured from a Blockade-runner.

taken before reaching that port having been declared lawful prizes in spite of perjury, the contraband traders then adopted the bold expedient of shipping their goods by regular lines to New York and there re-shipping them to Nassau and Bermuda; but the moment this trade attracted attention the New York customs officials were instructed to refuse clearances to ships "which, whatever their ostensible destination, were believed to be intended for South-

ern ports, or whose cargoes were in imminent danger of falling into the hands of the enemy."

The Nassau merchants got the British authorities to inquire into this refusal to clear ships to their port, the ground taken being that an unjust discrimination was made against them, but after considerable correspondence the British decided to let Uncle Sam alone in



A Six-pound Gun Captured from a Blockade-runner.

that matter. The subject is of special interest for the reason that it shows how strong the American government is in an emergency, even though the Executive is very often obliged to wait on Congress before making a move.

So, at last, the contraband traders were obliged to rely entirely on their ability as sneaks. The goods were sent to Nassau and

Bermuda as before, though, meantime, Havana, Cuba, and Matamoras, Mexico, on the Rio Grande, were of considerable importance. Cargoes of Southern products were safe after reaching these ports, if cargoes of contraband goods *en route* to them were not. Moreover,

A Nassau View—Along the Shore East of the Town.

From a photograph by Rau.

there was a change in the forms of ships used that made these nearby ports absolutely necessary to the traffic; for soon after the blockading fleets became efficient the use of condemned ships as blockade-runners was abandoned and smaller and swifter vessels were adopted. The transition from these to

vessels built especially to run between the islands and the Confederate ports was easy and was quickly made. The inventive talent of the traders was worthy of a better cause. Low and slender hulls, with the most powerful engines and twin screws or feathering paddles, were adopted. The paint used was of an ob-

Nassau Schooners.

From a photograph by Rau.

scuring color. There was no spar save that necessary to support a crow's nest for the lookout. The one thing that they could not keep from betraying them, at the last, was the smoke, but at one time they burned anthracite coal, and they stopped using it only when the American government prohibited the export of it. As time passed and the strangulation

caused by the blockade became more severe, the skill and ingenuity of the blockaders increased, so that the traffic never was stopped. There was, at one time, talk in Richmond of having the Confederate government take the traffic into its own hands absolutely, because of the demoralization caused by the illegitimate traders. They brought what they could sell at the most profit, of course. They brought liquors where medicines were needed, and silks and fancy slippers in place of the necessities of life for which the people suffered. It is a pity that the change was not made, for then one might have considered the blockade-runners with other feelings than disgust.

But if the traffic never ceased absolutely, the constriction of the blockade was and is now manifest. It was so efficient that one can scarcely read of the effects produced by it in the South without tears. One can believe that the blockade was a merciful as well as a just measure of war in that it shortened the struggle more than any other measure, and so saved many lives on both sides; but it is a pitiful fact that those who suffered most from the effects of the blockade were the women and the little ones. There are many tiny graves in the South that were dug because the blockade excluded the medicines needed by the sick.

Lest the reader think the language used here regarding the foreign blockade-runners is too strong, a story told by one of them, Thomas E. Taylor (see p. 110, "Running the Blockade"), shall be given. Taylor was a leader in the business. He ran the first steel ship (the *Banshee*) built especially for the purpose. Among other vessels under his control was the *Will-o'-the-Wisp*. She was a wretched ship, and here is what he says:

"I found her a constant source of delay and expenditure and I decided to sell her. After having her cobbled up with plenty of putty and paint, I was fortunate enough to open negotiations with some Jews with a view to her purchase. Having settled all preliminaries, we arranged for a trial trip, and after a very sumptuous lunch I proceeded to run her over a measured mile for the benefit of the would-be purchasers. I need scarcely mention that we subjected her machinery to the utmost strain, bottling up steam to a pressure of which our present Board of Trade, with its motherly care for our lives, would express strong disapproval. The log line was whisked merrily over the stern of the *Will-o'-the-Wisp*, with the satisfactory result that she logged 17½ knots. The Jews were delighted, so was I; and the bargain was clinched."

As to the legal status of a blockade-runner,

Taylor says: "The blockading force is entitled to treat such a ship in all respects as an enemy, and to use any means recognized in civilized warfare to drive off, capture or destroy her. A crew so captured may be treated as prisoners of war, nor is any resistance to capture permitted, and a single blow or shot in his own defence turns the blockade-runner into a pirate." In the same line is what Wilson's "Iron Clads in Action" says regarding the fact that the crews of captured blockade-runners "at least once or twice rose up on the prize crew and recaptured the ship. It was a big risk—piracy upon the high seas—with the penalty of death if blood was shed."

One of the cases wherein the crew recaptured the ship from the prize crew is described very well in the *Mercantile Marine Magazine* (London) for June, 1862, p. 177. The story begins: "On Saturday, May 3, the rooms of the Liverpool Mercantile Marine Association were crowded almost to suffocation by the merchants and Mercantile Marine officers of Liverpool, to witness the presentation of a magnificent testimonial to Captain William Wilson, of the British ship *Emily St. Pierre*, for his pluck and gallantry in recapturing his ship which had been seized by the United States cruiser *James Adger*, off Charleston." He had been guilty of "piracy upon the high

seas," but 170 Liverpool merchants united to give him a silver tea and coffee service, the association named gave him a gold medal, the owners of the ship gave him 2,000 guineas, and his crew gave him a sextant. The captain, in his little speech, said that the "token of your kindness" would remind the British sailor that "his efforts for the right and true will not be lost sight of nor go unrewarded." The story is well worth quoting as showing how men, naturally inclined to "the right and true," may be led by the exigencies of trade to applaud and reward even "piracy upon the high seas."

The reader should observe here that for a captured crew of one belligerent to rise against a prize crew of the other belligerent is a very different matter from this act of "piracy."

As already said, the blockade-runners were at first chiefly old sailing ships of various rigs or old steamers, the idea being to risk as little capital as possible in this illegitimate trade while making the utmost profit—not an unknown plan in legitimate trade, and never a wise one. Small schooners were used all through the wars to run the numerous shoal-water inlets along the coast, but the real interest in the blockade-runners begins when the Liverpool merchants began to build steamers especially designed for that purpose

—build them without hindrance on the part of their government.

Taylor, as said, was the first to carry out one of these swift vessels, and he describes her as follows:

"The new blockade-runner was a paddle boat, built of steel, on extraordinarily fine

The Blockade-runner *Teaser*.

From a photograph made in 1864.

lines, 214 feet long and 20 feet beam, and drew only 8 feet of water. Her masts were mere poles without yards, and with the least possible rigging. In order to attain greater speed in a sea-way she was built with a turtle-back deck forward. She was of 217 tons net register, and had an anticipated sea speed of eleven knots, with a coal consumption of thirty tons a day. Her crew, which included three

engineers and twelve firemen, consisted of thirty-six hands all told." And she was a type of the best sort, although they eventually reached a speed of seventeen knots.

At Nassau "everything aloft was taken down, till nothing was left standing but the lower masts, with small cross-trees for a look-out man on the fore, and the boats were lowered to the level of the rails. The whole ship was then painted a sort of dull white, the precise shade of which was so nicely ascertained by experience before the end of the war that a properly dressed runner on a dark night was absolutely indiscernible at a cable's length. So particular were captains on this point that some of them even insisted on their crews wearing white at night, holding that one black figure on the bridge or on deck was enough to betray an otherwise invisible vessel.

"The reckless loading, to which high profits and the perquisites allowed to officers led, is to a landsman inconceivable. That men should be found willing to put to sea at all in these frail craft piled like hay wagons is extraordinary enough, but that they should do so in the face of a vigilant and active blockading force, and do it successfully, seems rather an invention of romance than a commonplace occurrence of our own time."

So prepared, the steamer sneaked away from

port, fled from every sail and every smoke, crossed the Gulf Stream by daylight in order to determine her position uninfluenced by the current, and struck in on the coast at night. The light on the blockading flagship was commonly used to locate the harbor, and when this was seen the runner either ran away around the end of the squadron and slipped in along the coast or else plunged boldly through under the guns of the flagship.

The *Banshee* on her first inward trip received $250 per ton in gold for freight on war material. She carried out 100 tons of tobacco at $350 per ton, and 500 bales of cotton, that yielded $250 net per bale.

In January, 1865, Jefferson Davis, "in a message to Congress on this subject, said that the number of vessels arriving at only two ports — Charleston and Wilmington — from November the first to December the sixth, had been forty-three, and that only a very small portion of those outward bound had been captured; that out of 11,796 bales of cotton shipped since July the first, 1864, but 1,272 bales had been lost. And the special report of the Secretary of the Treasury in relation to the same matter stated that there had been imported at the ports of Wilmington and Charleston since October 26th, 1864, 8,632,000 pounds of meat, 1,507,000 pounds of lead,

1,933,000 pounds of saltpetre, 546,000 pairs of shoes, 316,000 pairs of blankets, 520,000 pounds of coffee, 69,000 rifles, 97 packages of revolvers, 2,639 packages of medicines, 43 cannon, with a very large quantity of other articles. From March 1st, 1864, to January 1st, 1865, the value of the shipments of cotton on Confederate government account was shown by the Secretary's report to have been $5,296,000 in specie, of which $1,500,000 had been shipped out between July 1st and December 1st, 1864.

"A list of vessels which were running the blockade from Nassau and other ports, in the period intervening between November, 1861, and March, 1864, showed that 84 steamers were engaged; of these, 37 were captured by the enemy, 12 were totally lost, 11 were lost and the cargoes partially saved, and one foundered at sea.

"They made 363 trips to Nassau and 65 to other parts. Among the highest number of runs made were those of the *Fanny*, which ran 18 times, and the *Margaret and Jessie*, which performed the same feat and was captured. Out of 425 runs from Nassau alone (including 100 schooners), only 62—about one in seven—were unsuccessful."

The following estimate of the disbursements and profits of a blockade-runner is taken from

Scharf, as is the quotation above. The estimate refers to the last part of the war, when the Confederate government took a half of the cargo space of runners:

One captain, per month	$5,000 00
First officer, $600, second do., $250; third do., $170	1,020 00
One boatswain	160 00
One carpenter	160 00
One purser	1,000 00
One steward, $150; three assistants, $ 80	330 00
One cook, $150; two assistants, $120	270 00
One engineer and three assistants	3,500 00
Twelve firemen and coal-heavers	2,400 00
240 tons of coal at $20	4,800 00
Rations for crew	2,700 00
Oil, tallow, and packing	1,000 00
Stevedores	5,000 00
Pilotage, out and in	3,000 00
Sea insurance	3,500 00
Wear and tear	4,250 00
Incidental expenses	1,000 00
Interest	875 00
Risks, 25 per cent	37,500 00
Provisions for passengers	3,000 00
	$80,265 00

Earnings, out and home:		
800 bales of cotton for government	$40,000 00	
800 bales of cotton for owners	40,000 00	
Return freight for owners	40,000 00	
Return freight for government	40,000 00	
Passengers, out and home	12,000 00	
		$172,000 00
Leaving a monthly profit of		$91,735 00

On the other hand, it should be observed that the Federal ships captured over 1,000 prizes during the war. One of these, the *Memphis*, paid $510,914.07 in prize money to her captors, two or three paid over $400,000, and whole fleets yielded from $100,000 to $300,000. The *Banshee*, of which Taylor boasts, paid $104,948.48 to the Yankee crews of the *Fulton* and *Grand Gulf*. Blockade-running, like privateering in 1812, paid a few firms handsomely. The Frasers of Charleston are said to have cleared $20,000,000 in gold, but many others lost heavily—the Jews who bought the *Will-o'-the-Wisp*, for instance. It was a thoroughly disreputable business, but so much of the story must be told, if only to show the character of part of the opposition which the government faced in the Civil War.

CHAPTER III

LOSS OF THE NORFOLK NAVY YARD

EFFECTIVE WORK DONE BY SOUTHERN NAVAL OFFICERS WHO CONTINUED TO WEAR THE NATIONAL UNIFORM THAT THEY MIGHT THE MORE READILY BETRAY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT —THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY WAS DECEIVED AND THE COMMANDANT AT NORFOLK DEMORALIZED—WILLIAM MAHONE'S TRICKS ADDED TO THE DEMORALIZATION AT THE YARD, AND IT WAS ABANDONED AT LAST IN A SHAMEFUL PANIC—PROPERTY THAT WAS WORTH MILLIONS OF DOLLARS, AND GUNS THAT TOOK THOUSANDS OF LIVES, FELL INTO THE CONFEDERATES' HANDS—THE FIRST NAVAL BATTLE OF THE WAR—THREE LITTLE WOODEN VESSELS WITH SEVEN SMALL GUNS SENT AGAINST A WELL-BUILT FORT MOUNTING THIRTEEN GUNS—THE HAZARDOUS WORK OF PATROLLING THE POTOMAC.

THE first actual battle of the war in which the navy took part occurred on May 20 and 21, 1861, and resulted in the capture of the Confederate forts that had been erected on the Potomac River at Acquia Creek to shut off communication between Washington and the sea. As the reader will remember, there was but one railroad running from the North to Washington in those days. The authorities of Maryland had decided that they would keep their State neutral during the impending

Washington, D. C., and Its Vicinity.

1. Matthias Point. 2. Acquia Creek. 3. Shipping Point. 4. Fredericksburg. 5. Mt. Vernon. 6. Alexandria. 7 Orange & Alexandria RR. 8. Loudon & Hampshire RR. 9. Manassas Junction. 10. Pull Run. 11. Centreville. 12. Fairfax Court House. 13. Vienna. 14 Falls Church. 15. Arlington House. 16. Chain Bridge. 17. Aqueduct Bridge. 18. Long Bridge. 19. Georgetown. 20. Washington. 21. President's House. 22. Smithsonian Institution. 23. Patent Office. 24. General Post Office. 25 Capitol. 26. Navy Yard. 27. Arsenal. 28. Maryland shore. 29. Fort Washington. 30. Indian Head. 31. Maryland Point. 32. Port Tobacco. 33. Forts Scott, Albany, Runyon, Richardson, etc.

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strife, acting, of course, on the theory of State sovereignty then held in the South, and had prohibited the transportation of troops across their State. The Confederates actually believed that this prohibition would prevent the Northern troops coming to the defence of the nation's capital overland, and that resort to ships would be had in strengthening the forces at Washington. To head off the ships, the Confederates swarmed to the bank of the Potomac River, and there were Confederate fortifications with colors flying, in plain view of Washington itself. The Confederates, in the few weeks following the secession of Virginia, were confident of capturing the national capital.

It is easy to show there was really some basis for the Confederate confidence. While the North groped and discussed, the Confederates were at work collecting material for war. Officers who, like Semmes, had left the service of the nation for that of the State, had gone North—communications being still open—and had purchased arms and ammunition in considerable quantities. They were very near to getting good steamers, too; and a patriot now reads with pleasure the keen words of scorn with which those officers spoke afterwards of the Northern men who were so ready to sell these goods—of the stay-at-home-and-

make-money patriots. But the South had not stopped at mere buying. Indeed, all the supplies purchased combined were as a pistol-shot to a torpedo in comparison with what they obtained when the Norfolk Navy Yard was abandoned to them.

It is certain that the whole story of this event will never be told; for it was brought about by officers of the navy, who, after serving honorably for many years under the flag, were not only willing to turn on the flag, as many did with satisfied consciences, but were willing to stoop to the shameful work of pretending to be loyal advisers of the nation's naval Secretary when they were secretly plotting the destruction of the nation. While yet Virginia had not passed the ordinance of secession these men "lost no opportunity to impress upon the mind of the Secretary of the Navy the importance of doing nothing to offend the State of Virginia." These naval officers, who were working day and night to overthrow the government, stopped at nothing. The commandant of the navy yard at Washington was one of them. In the midst of his plottings his daughter was married to one of the younger plotters, and the others of the gang were, of course, present at the wedding. "The house was everywhere festooned with the American flag, even to the bridal

bed." And down at the Norfolk Navy Yard one of the Southern officers went to Commodore McCauley, after the Pensacola Navy Yard had been turned over to the Confederates, and said: "You have no Pensacola officers here, Commodore; we will never desert you; we will stand by you to the last, even to the death." And this was said with the deliberate intent of keeping the commodore from doing anything that might save the nation's property for the use of the government. One need not search long for words to describe such actions.

Hiram Paulding.
From an engraving by Hall.

Secretary Welles called Capt. Hiram Paulding, an officer of known loyalty, to advise him. Paulding broke up the nest of scoundrels who wore the uniform that they might the more easily betray the flag, but it was then too late to prevent the accomplishment of the object for which they had chiefly

labored—the betraying of the Norfolk Navy Yard into the hands of the enemy. Large bodies of Confederate troops were already gathering at Norfolk, although Virginia had not passed her secession ordinances. Commodore McCauley was an old man and no match for the young scoundrels who at Norfolk, as in Washington, held on to their commissions and drew their pay up to the last day possible. They were incessant in their labors to prevent anything being done that would move a ship or a gun from the yard or add a loyal man to its forces.

"Early in April"—note that it was not until April—"the Department began to get very uneasy for the safety of the navy yard." "The Department was most anxious to get the *Merrimac* away, but was informed by Commodore McCauley that it would take a month to put her machinery in working order." No one seemed "to reflect that a few armed towboats with marines on board" could have taken every ship from the yard to an anchorage under Fortress Monroe.

However, on March 31st, 250 seamen were ordered from the New York Navy Yard to Norfolk, and fifty seamen were transferred to the revenue cutter *Harriet Lane*, which was sent to Norfolk. "On April 11th Commander James Alden was ordered to take command of

the *Merrimac* and Chief Engineer Isherwood was sent to Norfolk to get the ship's engines in working order." "On the 14th the work was commenced, and on the 17th the engines were in working order—so much for the commandant's assertion that it would take a month to get the ship ready to move." These quotations are from Admiral Porter's "Naval History of the Civil War." But he does not say McCauley was disloyal. McCauley had merely believed the wilful lies of those under him.

A View of the Norfolk Navy Yard.

From a photograph by Cook.

It is cheering to read that "the disloyalty did not at that time extend to the mechanics," and that "they worked day and night" to get the ship ready. "Then forty-four firemen and coal heavers volunteered for the service of taking the *Merrimac* out." At this Commodore McCauley, mindful of his orders to do nothing to excite the suspicions of hostile intent, said "that next morning would be time

enough." Next morning, there being a good head of steam on, word was again sent that she was ready, but he replied that he had decided not to send her out. "He gave as a reason the obstructions that had been placed in the channel, and when the anxious Alden told him they could clear away the obstructions he merely ordered the fires drawn. He had become utterly demoralized, and his demoralization was infectious."

At about this time came Captain Paulding in the *Pawnee* from Washington with a regiment of Massachusetts volunteers. His instructions were to "save what he could and act as he thought proper." When he arrived the Southern officers had just resigned, and the mechanics, being citizens of Virginia, had been induced to leave the yard in a body. It was reported that thousands of Virginia militia were coming to reinforce the Confederates gathering about the yard. The report was due to a trick of William Mahone, afterwards a noted practical politician of the State. He was president of the Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad, and ran empty cars up the line, loaded on a mob sent there for the purpose, and brought them back "with every man yelling with all his might." This was on April 19, 1861. The next day Confederate troops did arrive, and the demoralization in

the yard was completed. It was the most disgraceful panic in the history of the nation, for it was a panic that came on when not a gun had been fired, and the only overt acts of war were the robbing of a government powder magazine and the sinking of a few hulks (Mahone did this also), so that the government officers would think the channel was being obstructed.

"The broadside of the *Germantown*, which was all ready for sea and only waiting a crew, would have saved the navy yard against attack, overawed Norfolk and Portsmouth, and prevented the channel from being obstructed by the Confederates." So says Porter. Elsewhere he adds, that the "five heavy guns on a side on board the *Pennsylvania*," with fifty good seamen on board, "could have bid defiance to 5,000 Confederates in arms and held Norfolk and Portsmouth."

Nevertheless, "after the arrival of the *Pawnee* had made the yard doubly secure, the shells were drawn from the *Pennsylvania's* guns, and the guns spiked." Every other gun in the yard, afloat and ashore, except 200, was spiked. Men with sledge-hammers ran about the yard, vainly trying to knock the trunnions from the guns in store. Others soaked the decks of the ships and the buildings with tar and turpentine. Others laid a

mine in the dry dock—put twenty-six barrels (2,600 pounds) of powder there. Only the *Pawnee* and the *Cumberland*, which were full-manned, escaped the work of the destroyers.

"It was a beautiful starlight night, April 20th, when all the preparations were completed. The people of Norfolk and Portsmouth were wrapped in slumber, little dreaming that in a few hours the ships and public works which were so essential to the prosperity of the community would be a mass of ruins, and hundreds of people would be without employment and without food for their families. The *Pawnee* had towed the *Cumberland* out of the reach of the fire, and laid at anchor to receive on board those who were to fire the public property. Commodore McCauley had gone to bed that night, worn out with excitement and anxiety, under the impression that the force that had arrived at Norfolk was for the purpose of holding the yard and relieving him of responsibility, and when he was called at midnight and informed that the torch would be applied to everything, he could hardly realize the situation, and was chagrined and mortified at the idea of abandoning his post without any attempt to defend it.

"At 2.30 A.M., April 21st, a rocket from the *Pawnee* gave the signal; the work of destruction commenced with the *Merrimac*, and in

ten minutes she was one vast sheet of flame. In quick succession the trains to the other ships and buildings were ignited and the surrounding country brilliantly illuminated."

At the beginning of April, 1861, there were stored at this yard 2,000 cannon, of which 300 were new Dahlgrens; 150 tons of powder, besides vast quantities of loaded shells, machinery, castings, material for shipbuilding, and ordnance and equipment stores—all in great quantities. It contained a first-class stone dock. The steam frigate *Merrimac* was there undergoing repairs, the shops of the yard being well fitted for such work. The sailing sloops-of-war *Germantown* and *Plymouth*, of twenty-two guns each, and the brig *Dolphin*, of four guns, were there, not manned, but fit for sea. Six other sailing ships, including the famous *United States*, that were not of much use, but worth something, were also there. On the whole, the material of this yard was of more value, probably, than that in any two beside it in the country. The

The Old *New Hampshire* at the Norfolk Navy Yard.

From a photograph by Cook.

Confederates estimated the value of the property abandoned to them at $4,810,056.68 in gold. "But the greatest misfortune to the Union caused by the destruction of the Navy Yard was the loss of at least twelve hundred fine guns, most of which were uninjured. A number of them were quickly mounted at Sewell's Point to keep our ships from approaching Norfolk; others were sent to Hatteras Inlet, Ocracoke, Roanoke Island, and other points in the Sounds of North Carolina. Fifty-three of them were mounted at Port Royal, others at Fernandina and at the defences of New Orleans. They were met with at Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, Island No. 10, Memphis, Vicksburg, Grand Gulf, and Port Hudson. We found them up the Red River as far as the gunboats penetrated, and took possession of some of them on the cars at Duvall's Bluff, on White River, bound for Little Rock. They gave us a three hours' hard fight at Arkansas Post, but in the end they all returned to their rightful owners, many of them indented with Union shot, and not a few permanently disabled.

"Had it not been for the guns captured at Norfolk and Pensacola, the Confederates would have found it a difficult matter to arm their fortifications for at least a year after the breaking out of hostilities, at the expiration of

which time they began to manufacture their own ordnance and import it from abroad. Great as was, therefore, the loss of our ships, it was much less than the loss of our guns." So says Porter.

Rightly considered, the abandonment of the Norfolk Navy Yard was as great a misfortune to the South as to the North, for it needlessly prolonged and intensified a conflict

Burning of the Vessels at the Norfolk Navy Yard.

that could have but one end. No one can estimate the number of lives that these guns cost both sides—the fortifications that were erected and the battles that were fought in consequence of their falling into Confederate hands. But if it took the Confederates a whole year to get at the work of casting cannon, it is not unreasonable to suppose that one year of the war would have been saved had the government held its own.

It was with guns that were needlessly abandoned at Norfolk that the Confederates made their first fight against the Federal navy—the battle at Acquia Creek. Something like thirty miles below Washington the Potomac makes a wide sweep to the east. Two creeks enter it there from the west—one, right on the point of the elbow, being known as Potomac Creek, and the other, that enters a little way to the north of the elbow, being called Acquia Creek. There is a considerable bluff on the point between Acquia Creek and the river, known in those days as Split Rock Bluff. Because this creek was the terminus of a railroad leading to Fredericksburg, Virginia, and because it was believed by the Confederates that the point commanded the Potomac River, three batteries were erected. The Confederate accounts say that there were thirteen guns here, of which two were eight-inch Dahlgrens, brought from Norfolk. The Confederates completed this battery about May 14, 1861. They had decided to abandon Alexandria whenever the Federals chose to take it, and make Acquia Creek their frontier post on the river.

Accordingly, when the Federals, under cover of the *Pawnee*, Capt. S. C. Rowan, crossed over on the 24th, the Confederates moved out, and there was no bloodshed until the insane hotel-keeper, Jackson, shot Colonel Ellsworth

because the Confederate flag was taken down from the Marshall House. Then the Potomac flotilla, which was under Fleet Officer James H. Ward, was ordered to attack the Acquia Creek batteries.

In one respect that order was one of the most remarkable ever issued in the navy, up to that date, for Ward had under him the *Freeborn*, a wooden paddle-wheel steamer of 250 tons, carrying three guns, the largest being a thirty-two-pounder smooth-bore; the *Anacostia*, a screw steamer of 100 tons, carrying two little howitzers, and the *Resolute*, a steamer of ninety tons, carrying two howitzers. In all, three frail wooden vessels, carrying seven small guns, were sent to attack a well-planned, well-manned fort with not less than thirteen guns, of which the worst was better than the best afloat before it. This matter is especially worth considering in connection with what a Secretary of the Navy is likely to do in future if the nation is ever again unexpectedly obliged to fight.

However, Ward was a great man. He had already distinguished himself as a writer on gunnery and naval tactics and as an inventor. He now showed his pluck by bravely attacking the forts.

It was on Friday, May 31, 1861, at 10.30 o'clock at night, that the first shot of this war

was fired from a naval ship at a fort. In all, fourteen shots were fired, and the Confederates fired fifty-six at the ships. The forts were not damaged, and one Confederate soldier lost a finger. However, the Confederates abandoned the battery they had erected at the water level and took the guns to the top of the bluff. Next day, the *Pawnee* having come to reinforce the fleet, the attack was renewed, and for five hours the four little steamers hurled their shot at the forts. The Confederates fired over 1,000 shot in return. It is instructive to note that no one was hurt on either side by all that firing. The ships were struck several times, but "there was no irreparable damage done." The attack failed absolutely.

Ward was afterwards killed in an attack on the Confederate forts erected at Matthias Point, fifteen miles or so farther down the river. This was on June 27, 1861. The Federal forces attempted to land there and were driven off easily. But for the coolness of Lieut. J. C. Chaplin, of the *Pawnee*, who rallied his force, in spite of a heavy fire, the whole landing party would have been captured. Ward was the only one killed, but four others were wounded.

On the whole, the work of the navy on the Potomac was confined to patrolling the stream for the purpose of preventing the Confed-

erates of the two slave-holding States that bordered it from communicating with each other. The men engaged in it have not received and never can receive the credit they deserve for what they did, simply because there was nothing striking about the work. More unfortunate still, they had steamers that were wholly inadequate to the work, and the fighting, when any was done, was like that at Acquia Creek —ineffective necessarily. Instead of an opportunity to win fame, the men found toil of the most wearisome kind, and as a reward for it they got the reproaches of ignorant editors at the North and the jeers of exultant editors at the South. Nevertheless, this much was done : The river was kept open, so far as was needed, for the transportation of troops and supplies, to and fro, and when, in 1862, the Confederates found that their forts could not stop traffic, even though their guns had an effective range greater than the width of the river, they retired from the bank of the Potomac altogether.

CHAPTER IV

A STORY OF CONFEDERATE PRIVATEERS

THEY DID PLENTY OF DAMAGE FOR A TIME, BUT THEIR CAREER WAS BRIEF—CAPTURE OF THE FIRST OF THE CLASS, AND TRIAL OF HER CREW ON A CHARGE OF PIRACY—REASONS WHY THEY COULD NOT BE HELD AS CRIMINALS—LUCK OF THE *JEFFERSON DAVIS*—A NEGRO WHO RECAPTURED A CONFEDERATE PRIZE TO ESCAPE THE TERRORS OF SLAVERY—A SKIPPER WHO THOUGHT A GOVERNMENT FRIGATE WAS A MERCHANTMAN—THE "NEST" BEHIND CAPE HATTERAS.

FROM a blockade of the ports of the Southern States it was a short and natural step for the navy to land and effectually close some port to Confederate commerce by occupying it. But before telling the story of the first expedition organized for this purpose the story of the Confederate privateers—real privateers, as distinguished from Confederate cruisers like the *Alabama*—will be told, for the reason that it was the work of these privateers that in good part led the government to decide on the first expedition for occupying a Southern port.

As a matter of fact, the idea of blockading the Southern ports was born of the determination of the Confederates to commission priva-

teers. The sequence of events was as follows: The Confederates captured Fort Sumter on April 13, 1861. On the 15th President Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to protect the government property and enforce the laws of the nation in the seceding States. On the 17th Jefferson Davis "published a counter proclamation inviting applications for letters of marque and reprisal to be granted under the seal of the Confederate States against ships and property of the United States and their citizens." The quotation is from Scharf's "Confederate States Navy." It was on receipt of this that Mr. Lincoln, on the 19th, ordered the blockade of the Southern ports.

However, Mr. Davis did not issue any commissions to privateers until after the Confederate Congress had passed, on May 6, 1861, an act authorizing him to do so. This act provided such safeguards as had ruled American privateers in the War of 1812. On May 14th another act supplemented the first by regulating the sale of prizes and the distribution of the proceeds.

Sufficient time has passed since that war to enable at least the younger generation of Northern-born men to view its events judicially, and it is therefore likely that no student of history will now be found to deny that the letters of marque subsequently issued under

these acts of the Confederate Congress were entirely legal. The Confederates were entitled to the rights of belligerents—they at least became entitled to them the moment that President Lincoln issued his proclamation blockading the Southern ports. There is no point of international law more firmly established now than that a proclamation of a blockade carries with it a concession that war exists between the blockaders and the blockaded. And this is worth remembering, because Secretary of State Seward was unwilling to admit it for a very long time after a state of war did actually exist. At the same time it was entirely natural that Northern shipping men should have called these privateers pirates. Business operations tend to concentrate one's nerves in his pocket and to render them so sensitive that any diminution of weight in the pocket causes excruciating agony. Naturally these would not hesitate to ignore the belligerent rights of an enemy, nor to use harsh and unjust language when they felt this pain.

Availing themselves of the invitation to do so, a number of citizens of Charleston equipped the pilot boat *Savannah* with an eighteen-pounder, mounted on a pivot; procured a crew of thirty men, all told, under Capt. Thomas H. Baker; supplied them with small arms and ammunition, and sent them out

under a commission which, because it was the first issued, shall be given in full, as follows:

"*Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, To all who shall see these Presents, Greeting:*

"Know ye, That by virtue of the power vested in me by law, I have commissioned, and do hereby commission, have authorized, and do hereby authorize, the schooner or vessel called the *Savannah* (more particularly described in the schedule hereunto annexed), whereof T. Harrison Baker is commander, to act as a private armed vessel in the service of the Confederate States, on the high seas, against the United States of America, their ships, vessels, goods, and effects, and those of their citizens, during the pendency of the war now existing between the said Confederate States and the said United States.

"This commission to continue in force until revoked by the President of the Confederate States for the time being.

"Given under my hand and the seal of the Confederate States, at Montgomery, this eighteenth day of May, A.D., 1861.

"(Signed) JEFFERSON DAVIS.

"By the President. R. Toombs, Secretary of State.

"SCHEDULE OF DESCRIPTION OF THE VESSEL.

"Name—Schooner *Savannah.* Tonnage—Fifty-three $\frac{41}{95}$th tons. Armament—One large

pivot gun and small arms. No. of crew—thirty."

The *Savannah* sailed out of Charleston on the night of Sunday, June 2, 1861, and, eluding the Federal frigate *Minnesota*, went cruising for Northern merchantmen. The schooner was small, and the weather hot. The crew slept on deck that night, and, as was testified

"THE CONFEDERATE STATES PRIVATEER SAVANNAH, LETTER OF MARQUE No 1, CAPTURED OFF CHARLESTON, BY THE U.S. BRIG PERRY, LIEUT. PARROTT.

Entered according to act of Congress in the Year 1861 by S. ETTMORE, 59 NASSAU ST. N.Y. in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

in court later on, they were not feeling very well next morning. In fact, "being on a flare-up the night before, not much was said," even when a sail was seen, and it became certain that the sail "was a Yankee vessel." Eventually the sail was overhauled. It proved to be the brig *Joseph*, of Rockland, Maine, Capt. Thies N. Meyer, bound, sugar laden, from Cardenas, Cuba, to Philadelphia. The brig had a

crew of six, all told. She was easily taken, and with a prize crew of six men was sent to Georgetown, South Carolina, where she was condemned and sold in the usual form.

Nevertheless, the cruise was not a paying venture, for soon after sending the prize away the *Savannah* chased the government man-o'-war brig *Perry*, thinking her another merchantman, and was, in consequence, captured. The *Perry* turned her over to the *Minnesota;* the *Minnesota* towed her into Charleston harbor near enough to let her owners learn of their loss, and then sent her North. At New York the *Savannah's* crew was thrown into prison as pirates, and on July 16, 1861, they were indicted for piracy. The printed report of the trial that followed makes an interesting book of 385 pages. The accused as a whole claimed the rights of prisoners of war, but in spite of the plain evidence that they were entitled to such rights, the jury disagreed. Perhaps when one considers the state of the public mind in the North at that time, the wonder is that they were not convicted and hanged.

Having been remanded in irons to prison, the Confederate authorities took up their case. The victory the Confederates had obtained at Manassas enabled them to put a number of Federal prisoners into irons to abide the fate of the *Savannah's* crew. The Federal officers

so confined included five colonels, two lieutenant-colonels, three majors, and three captains. Mr. Davis sent an envoy with a protest to Washington. Nothing was done about the matter just then.

Meantime, on October 25, 1861, a member of the crew of the privateer *Jefferson Davis* was convicted on a charge of piracy, and on the 29th three others of the crew were convicted. Nevertheless, on February 3, 1862, all of the alleged pirates, with thirty-four men from the privateer *Petrel*, were sent to Fort Lafayette as prisoners of war, and the date is of some importance because the change of policy, even though it were compelled by a threat of retaliation, was another official acknowledgment that the government had a very great war upon its hands instead of a local insurrection of no concern to the rest of the world.

Much more interesting than that of the *Savannah* are the stories of some of the other privateers. The *Jefferson Davis*, for instance, had a career that approached that of some of the American privateers in 1812. She was built by Northern capitalists in 1854 for a slaver, and was captured on the coast of Africa with many slaves on board, and sent to Charleston. A fine Baltimore clipper she was, and when the war came she was seized and armed with three eighteen-pounders and two

twelves. She got out to sea on June 28th, having seventy men before the mast. On July 6th, off Hatteras, she got the brig *John Welsh*, loaded with sugar. On the same day the schooner *Enchantress* was captured, and the next day, being but 150 miles from Sandy Hook, she took the schooner *S. J. Waring*, that was bound to Montevideo with a valuable cargo. The first-named prizes were sent to Southern ports; but William Tillman, a colored man, recaptured the *Waring*, and one fact connected with the adventure makes the story worth telling.

The *Davis* placed a prize crew of five men on the *Waring*, Mr. Montague Amiel, a Charleston pilot, being the prize master. William Tillman, who was the *Waring's* cook; Brice Mackinnon, a passenger, and two of the *Waring's* seamen were left on board of her, and she was headed toward the South. The Northern men at once made friends with their captors. The negro continued to cook perforce, but he made no objection to the work, and the two Northern seamen volunteered to make the best of a bad streak of luck by helping to work the ship.

But because Tillman knew that he would become a slave as soon as he was carried into a Southern port, he determined that he would never go there, and on the night of July 16,

1861, when fifty miles south of Charleston, he found opportunity to become master of the schooner.

It was at about midnight. Prize Master Amiel was asleep in the cabin, with the prize mate in a near-by berth. The second mate was on deck, but about half-asleep, while one of the *Waring's* original crew was at the wheel, and two of the prize seamen were on duty near the bow. Taking the hatchet which he used in splitting wood for the galley stove, the negro killed the prize captain and the two mates, when the Confederate seamen surrendered and agreed to help work the ship back to New York. There was no one on board who understood navigation, but the negro knew enough to lay a course that would bring "the broadside of America in sight," and after that he followed the coast until he reached New York.

Meantime the *Davis* had captured the *Mary Goodell*, from New York to Buenos Ayres; but she was allowed to go after the prisoners were put on board, and five of her crew had shipped in the *Davis*. On the same day (July 9th) the *Mary E. Thompson*, of Searsport, was captured and sent in, after which the *Davis* went to the West Indies.

In all, nearly a dozen merchantmen were captured by the energetic captain, Louis M.

Coxetter, of the *Davis*. He then returned, and while trying to enter St. Augustine, Florida, grounded, and the vessel was lost. Not all of his prizes ever reached home, and it was from the recaptured vessels that the men convicted of piracy were taken. It is said that the prizes sent in, however, netted over $200,000 in gold for the crew. Coxetter himself, like most of his class, became a blockade-runner after the blockade, and England's refusal to permit the sale of Confederate prizes in her ports made privateering unprofitable — that is, say, after January 1, 1862.

Between July 19 and August 27, 1861, the privateer *Dixie* sent in three prizes. The *Freely*, another Charleston privateer, was also a successful boat. So was the *York*. The revenue cutter *Aiken*, which was converted into the privateer *Petrel*, at Charleston, was about the most unlucky of the fleet. She went chasing the frigate *St. Lawrence* soon after getting safely to sea, thinking the big man-o'-war was a merchantman. Certainly no men worse fitted for their task than the *Petrel's* crew were ever sent to sea, for even when within short range they failed to recognize the warship. They fired three guns— the first two across the bows of the *St. Lawrence* to heave her to, and the last one at her. Then the *St. Lawrence* opened her ports and

fired three guns at the privateer. An eight-inch shell and a thirty-two-pound solid shot struck her below the water-line, the shell bursting while right in the planks. The hole made was so large that the *Petrel* rolled to the swell and sank instantly, leaving her crew afloat in the water. Four men were drowned, and the rest were picked up by the *St. Lawrence.*

There were a number of other privateers from Charleston, but they neither accomplished nor suffered anything worth especial mention. In addition, there was a fleet of small schooners that had their headquarters in the Pamlico Sound. It is worth the reader's time to take a look at the map of the enclosed waters along the coast south of the Chesapeake Bay; it is worth any traveller's time to visit the region. A series of long, narrow islands, built of the *débris* of New England rocks, lie along there, enclosing the waters of Currituck, Albemarle, and Pamlico sounds. They are but narrow, and, for the most part, but barren stretches of sand. Here and there a shoal inlet cuts across this sand-bar—an inlet that is shifted to and fro, and deepened and shoaled by the wind-driven water of the sea, but always kept open somewhere by the outflow of the waters from the slope of land east of the Alleghany ridge. There are a few inlets that are never closed wholly, no matter how the set of the

Destruction of the Privateer *Petrel* by the *St. Lawrence.*

From an engraving by Hinshelwood of the painting by Manzoni.

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tide piles the sand into them, and of these the most important are known as Hatteras and Ocracoke inlets.

The Hatteras Inlet, which lies thirteen miles southwest of Cape Hatteras, is the most important. Here the water over the bar is, at high tide, usually fourteen feet deep ; within is a safe anchorage for any ship that can pass in. But a mile inside the bar lies another, where the water is ordinarily but seven feet deep. Once across that, plenty of deep water is found, both north and south, and away inland to the ports whence came, in those days, the bounties of nature called naval stores. Hatteras is of small importance in these days, since railroads have been stretched along the coast, but the time was when not a small fleet of coasters used it regularly.

It was from among these vessels and their crews that the " Hatteras pirates " came in the first four or five months of the Civil War. They were, of course, lawfully commissioned private cruisers, but the records of their deeds have been lost, save, as it is known, that one bark, seven brigs, and eight schooners had been carried in there as prizes previous to August 28, 1861, and condemned and sold. The *Transit*, of New London ; the *Wm. S. Robins*, and the *J. W. Hewes* were lying at Newbern alone, on the first of July, awaiting adjudication.

Then, too, it speedily became a haunt of blockade-runners seeking cotton as well as naval stores, and to dispose of manufactured goods from England.

To the Northern merchant Pamlico Sound was a "pirates' nest" that needed immediate attention, and the next chapter shall tell what was done.

CHAPTER V

THE FORT AT HATTERAS INLET TAKEN

AN EXPEDITION PLANNED BY THE NAVY DEPARTMENT THAT RESULTED IN THE FIRST FEDERAL VICTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR—AN AWKWARD LANDING FOLLOWED BY INEFFECTUAL FIRE FROM SHIPS UNDER WAY—ONE FORT TAKEN AND ABANDONED—ANCHORED BEYOND RANGE OF THE FORT AND COMPELLED SURRENDER BY MEANS OF THE BIG PIVOT GUNS—A WEARISOME RACE FROM CHICAMICOMICO TO HATTERAS LIGHTHOUSE WON BY THE FEDERALS—CAPTURE OF ROANOKE ISLAND—ORIGIN OF THE AMERICAN MEDAL OF HONOR.

For the work that was to be done in restoring the Federal authority over Hatteras Island and adjacent inland waters a large force was prepared, because no accurate estimate of the Confederate force there was obtainable. To Flag Officer Silas H. Stringham was assigned the command of the expedition. His squadron consisted of the frigate *Minnesota*, Capt. G. I. Van Brunt; the frigate *Wabash*, Capt. Samuel Mercer; the *Monticello*, Capt. John P. Gillis; the *Pawnee*, Capt. S. C. Rowan, and the *Harriet Lane* (revenue cutter), Capt. John Faunce. The tug *Fanny*, under Lieut. Pierce Crosby, went along as a tender, while the transports

Adelaide, Capt. H. S. Stellwagen, and *Peabody*, Capt. R. R. Lowry, carried 860 soldiers under Gen. B. F. Butler. The troops under Butler had orders to return to Fort Monroe as soon as the object of the expedition was attained.

S. H. Stringham

From an engraving by Buttre.

On the afternoon of August 26, 1861, the squadron rounded Cape Hatteras and anchored about three miles above the inlet, where it was proposed to make a landing. Two schooners, with their decks loaded with "heavy iron surf-boats," had been brought along, and these surf-boats were floated before dark. The next morning the debarkation of General Butler's force began, and Captain Shuttleworth, of the marines, with enough of his men to raise the whole landing force to 915 men, went along. The *Pawnee*, the *Monticello*, and the *Harriet Lane* steamed close in and opened the attack on the beach by shelling the live-oak and other

trees that grew in profusion just beyond the reach of the waves.

When the surf-boats started ashore at 8.45 o'clock in the morning, the other ships of the squadron made a swoop at the forts that could be plainly seen guarding the inlet. The sailing frigate *Cumberland* had joined the force during the night, and the *Wabash* took her in tow and followed in the wake of the flagship *Minnesota.* Meantime the frigate *Susquehanna* had happened along, and she joined in the procession, the plan of attack being to steam in until within range, fire as the forts were passed, and then steam out to sea and back again over an elliptical route. It was a plan that was followed in several attacks of the kind; but it is condemned by Admiral Porter as "not the best calculated to bring an engagement to a speedy conclusion." The plan "bothers the enemy's gunners"—it is safer for the ships—but it also "detracts from the accuracy of the fire on board the vessels."

B. F. Butler.

From a photograph.

A small earthwork called Fort Clark was the first one met. It had no bomb-proof, and it mounted five guns. The ships opened fire on this fort long before they were within range, and the fort replied. Both sides sowed the water with shot and shells; but the Confederates soon ceased to waste their ammunition, and when the ships got within range, their fire proved so hot that the fort was abandoned.

Meantime the troops had reached the surf in their boats, and for a pleasant day they found it a right vigorous surf. There was very little difficulty in getting the boats to the sand; they were so large that a gale would scarcely have swamped them; but the moment they touched bottom forward, the waves caught them under the floating stern, slewed them around broadside on, and hove them up hard and fast. In vain the soldiers and sailors and marines tugged and pried and swore. In all 420 men, with two howitzers, were placed on the beach, and not another armed man could they land. And what made matters worse was the fact that they had neither provisions nor supplies of any kind, and their ammunition (it was the day of paper cartridges) was in great part wet by the surf. It was a fortunate thing that the Confederates were kept busy in Fort Hatteras about that time.

However, the Confederates having aban-

Bombardment and Capture of the Forts at Hatteras Inlet, N. C.

From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives.

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doned Fort Clark, the Federal troops were marched to it, and at 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Union flag was hoisted above it.

Meantime the fire of Fort Hatteras had been "smothered by the fire of the frigates," and the Confederate flag had disappeared. Seeing this, the frigates ceased firing at 12.30 o'clock, on the supposition that the Confederates were willing to surrender. But when, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the *Monticello* was ordered to go in through the inlet and take a look at the small fleet of Confederate vessels inside the inner bar, the Confederate fort opened fire on her. The *Wabash* was at this time towing the *Cumberland* to a safe anchorage off shore, but the *Minnesota*, *Susquehanna*, *Pawnee*, and *Harriet Lane* returned the fire with vigor until sunset. But the fire was, "for the most part, ineffective, from too great a distance," as Ammen says. The fact is, there was nothing reckless in the attack.

At sundown the Union troops abandoned Fort Clark and camped up the beach, where the smaller steamers could protect them. They had had a hungry day of it, but food was sent ashore at night. Then, as the night wore away, the troops threw up a sand battery facing the sound, and from this threw some shells at the Confederate vessels, "which seems to have materially disconcerted the enemy," and pre-

vented the landing of reinforcements for the fort.

The next morning the *Susquehanna* led the way in to attack Fort Hatteras, and the *Minnesota*, the *Wabash*, and the *Cumberland* followed, and all came to anchor "in excellent position and commenced firing with effect." That is to say, the position was excellent because the ships were entirely beyond the range of the fort, while their pivot guns, fifteen in number, were throwing every shell fired into the Confederate works. The fire began at 8 o'clock in the morning. The bomb-proof in the fort was seriously damaged, and at 11 o'clock it was set on fire by a shell that dropped through a ventilator. The magazine being in great peril, the Confederates hoisted a white flag at 11.10 o'clock. This was on August 28, 1861 ; and that was not only the first victory that the navy of the nation had gained, but it was the first victory that any Union force had gained in this war for the defence of the nation's life. The Union force did not lose a man. The Confederates lost two killed and thirteen wounded of which we are certain. It is asserted that the losses were greater.

Flag Officer Samuel Barron, of the Confederate navy, who had charge of a small fleet of armed boats on the sound ; Major W. S. G.

Andrews, commanding the forts, and 615 men and officers were captured. The two forts contained together twenty-five guns, every one of which came from the Norfolk Navy Yard, as did also 1,000 muskets and a quantity of ordnance stores found in the fort.

This point was thereafter held by the Union forces throughout the war. To show the value of this victory, we may quote the report of General Butler. He said:

Eight-inch Mortar Captured at Hatteras.

"From there the whole coast of Virginia and North Carolina, from Norfolk to Cape Lookout, is within our reach by light draught vessels, which cannot possibly live at sea during the winter months. From it offensive operations may be made upon the whole coast of North Carolina to Bogue Inlet, extending many miles inland to Washington, Newbern, and Beaufort. In the language of the chief-engineer of the rebels, Colonel Thompson, in

an official report, 'it is the key of Albemarle.' In my judgment, it is a station second in importance only to Fortress Monroe on this coast. As a depot for coaling and supplies for the blockading squadron it is invaluable. As a harbor for our coasting trade, or inlet from the winter storms or from pirates, it is of the first importance."

L. M. Goldsborough.

From an engraving by Buttre.

A fort at Ocracoke Inlet was abandoned by the Confederates when those at Hatteras fell.

Meantime the Twentieth Regiment of Indiana Volunteers, under Colonel Brown, of the Hatteras Island garrison, got into serious trouble. The regiment had gone to a small settlement at the north end of the island—Chicamicomico by name—twenty-five miles north of Cape Hatteras lighthouse. Just what purpose they were to serve there is not now apparent; but the Confederates, who had fortified Roanoke

Island, came with a superior force to cut them off from communication with the forces at the inlet, and there was a most fatiguing race down the beach. The Union force won, the Confederates being driven off by the Union steamer *Monticello*, Capt. D. L. Braine.

Following this, in 1862, came the expedition under Flag Officer L. M. Goldsborough and Gen. A. E. Burnside against Roanoke Island. The force left Hampton Roads on January 11th. There was a long delay at Hatteras Inlet bar, but on Friday morning, February 7th, they were facing the Confederate forts on the north end of Roanoke Island, and a squadron of Confederate ships, which their commander, Commodore W. F. Lynch, described as "two old side-wheel steamers, and six propellers—the former possessing some speed; the latter slow in their movements, and one of them frequently disabling its shaft."

Stephen C. Rowan.
From a photograph.

The Union steamers were, in fact, no better. Both fleets were wholly unarmored, but the guns on both sides were good for that day, and therein lies the one point worth noting, The Union fleet on one side and the Confederate forts and fleet on the other fought for six hours at one stretch at easy range. One Union ship reports firing 181 shells, and probably those that made no report of the matter (there were nineteen in all) did as well, but only one ship —a Confederate—was sunk, and she was able to run away to a fort before going down. After two days the Confederate forts surrendered, and the Confederate ships fled to Elizabeth City.

Commander S. C. Rowan, with a part of the Union fleet, pursued and destroyed or captured them all save one that passed through the canal to Norfolk. The conflict at Elizabeth City is especially notable, because the deed of a heroic gunner led Congress to pass an act creating a Union naval medal. Says Lossing:

"An extraordinary example of heroism was exhibited during this engagement by John Davis, a Finlander, who was a gunner's mate on board the *Valley City*. A shell entered that vessel, and, exploding in the magazine, set fire to some wood-work. Davis was there, and, seeing the imminent danger to the vessel and all on board, because of an open barrel of

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Attack on Roanoke Island—Landing of the Troops.

From an engraving of the painting by Chappel.

Landing of Troops on Roanoke Island.

From an engraving by Perine of a drawing by Momberger.

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gunpowder from which he had been serving, he seated himself upon it, and so remained until the flames were extinguished. For this brave act the Secretary of the Navy rewarded him with the appointment of acting-gunner in the navy (March 11, 1862), by which his salary was raised from $300 to $1,000 a year. Admiring citizens of New York raised and presented to him $1,100. The Secretary of the Navy, by authority of an act of Congress, approved December 21, 1861, presented him with a *Medal of Honor*, on which are inscribed the following words: 'Personal Valor, John Davis, Gunner's Mate, U.S.S. *Valley City*, Albemarle Sound, February 10, 1862.' Such medals were afterward presented to a considerable number of gallant men in subordinate stations, for acts of special bravery 'before the enemy.' Davis was the first recipient."

CHAPTER VI

ALONG SHORE IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

THE SHAMEFUL STORY OF PENSACOLA AND FORT PICKENS—WHEN LIEUTENANT RUSSELL BURNED THE *JUDAH*—A BRITISH CONSUL'S ACTIONS WHEN CONFEDERATE FORTS WERE ATTACKED AT GALVESTON—EXTRAORDINARY PANIC AT THE HEAD OF THE PASSES IN THE MISSISSIPPI WHEN FOUR GREAT WARSHIPS, CARRYING FORTY-FIVE OF THE BEST GUNS AFLOAT, FLED FROM A DISABLED TUGBOAT THAT WAS REALLY UNARMED—ONCE MORE IN GALVESTON—LIEUTENANT JOUETT'S FIERCE FIGHT WHEN HE DESTROYED THE *ROYAL YACHT*.

THERE were stirring events in and around the Gulf of Mexico during the year 1861—some of them stirring the naval sailors in one way and some in another. The trouble began there very early in the year—on January 12th, in fact, when Colonel Lomax and Major W. H. Chase, with some Florida and Alabama troops, surrounded the navy yard at Pensacola and compelled Commodore James Armstrong to surrender it to the Confederates. It was very well known that an attack impended a long time before it actually happened, but no effort was made by any one in the yard to preserve any of the government property for

Surrender of the Navy Yard at Pensacola.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

government use. Armstrong was not, indeed, disloyal, but he was very properly suspended from the navy for five years for his failure at Pensacola. The executive officer under him, Commander Ebenezer Farrand, and Lieut. Francis B. Renshaw had already decided to join the Confederate forces, and it should not be forgotten that they were among the men willing to serve the Confederates while still wearing the uniform of the government. Renshaw himself, while in national uniform, had the old flag hauled down and the Confederate flag sent up in its place. Farrand did still worse. He refused to allow the powder to be removed from the magazine when a loyal officer, Commander Henry Walke, proposed removing it. He kept it in the magazine unguarded in order that the Confederates might get it. When he could do no more for the Confederates by remaining in the pay of the government, he sent in his resignation.

Henry Walke.

From a photograph.

Meantime the soldiers in charge of the three forts that guarded the harbor had been concentrated at Fort Pickens on the 10th by Lieut. Adam J. Slemmer, U. S. A. At that time Commander Henry Walke was in Pensacola, in command of the transport *Supply*. She was *en route* to Vera Cruz with stores for the government ships lying there. On January 9th, Walke was ordered by Commodore Armstrong to assist Slemmer in concentrating the troops and army supplies at Fort Pickens. Walke at once started to obey this order; but when about to engage in doing so, another order came under which he was to merely give some food to the men already in Fort Pickens and then return to the navy yard, leaving the army forces scattered among the three forts about the harbor. Walke, in his "Reminiscences," says Farrand "hoodwinked" the commodore into issuing that order. Walke showed it to Slemmer, and Slemmer, in despair, said if that order was obeyed, no further effort to hold the forts should be made. But Walke at once determined to disobey the order in so far as he must in order to concentrate the army forces at Fort Pickens.

Walke's act was one of the most remarkable of that day. It was almost without precedent that a naval officer should be inde-

pendent-minded enough to do what was right in the interests of the government without first receiving an unmistakable order to do it. But that a man should save a fort for the government by actually disobeying the order of a superior—that was then unheard of, though an officer of a higher grade saved three fine ships from the *Merrimac* in like fashion some time later. By concentrating the army forces at Pickens, contrary to Armstrong's orders, Walke saved the fort. Then, when the yard had been surrendered to the Confederates, he took the paroled officers and men, with their families, from the yard and carried them to New York. This, although done in the interest of the government, and as an act of humanity, was also contrary to his original order which contemplated a passage to Vera Cruz. So Walke was court-martialled, found guilty, and sentenced to be censured! This is perhaps the only case on record where the legal censure of an American naval officer was as a badge of honor.

Meantime the Buchanan administration was in some way moved, after the navy yard was captured, to send the *Brooklyn* down there with eighty-six artillery men and 115 marines. But before these could be landed the administration repented, and the *Brooklyn* was

ordered to lie off the harbor. And there she lay when Mr. Lincoln came into office. On March 12th an order was sent to Capt. J. Vodges, commanding the artillery company on the *Brooklyn*, to land. This order was received by Vodges on March 31st, and on April 1st he called on Capt. H. A. Adams, of the *Brooklyn*, for boats, etc., for the landing. Instead of giving them, Adams declined, and wrote a letter to the Navy Department, saying that the order to Vodges "may have been given without a full knowledge of the condition of affairs here." He was sure that reinforcing the fort "would be viewed as a hostile act, and would be resisted to the utmost." The department was warned that "it would be a serious thing to bring on, by precipitation, a collision." In short, this officer, who was a Union man, had been cajoled into a state of mind where he ignored the fact that the Confederates were working day and night to place their defences in the best possible order and were adding to their forces daily. He had, in truth, been instructed by Buchanan's Secretary of the Navy "not to land the company unless said fort shall be attacked *or preparations be made for its attack.*" The italics are not in the original document, of course, but they are inserted to make plain the way in which Adams ignored the Confed-

erate work of preparing to capture Fort Pickens by increasing the effectiveness of Fort McRae and Fort Barrancas. To land a man in Fort Pickens would be "viewed as a hostile act," and would "bring on, by precipitation, a collision." To improve the Confederate Fort McRae was not to be considered! Certainly the contempt which the Southern people of that day felt for men of the North was not without some justification.

These facts seem worth giving because they show the difference between the state of mind on the Union side and that on the Confederate. The Confederates knew what they wanted and were reaching after it ceaselessly: The Union forces at this time were not much short of mental demoralization, anywhere, and the quick-witted Confederates took advantage of it.

This letter was carried to Washington by Lieut. Washington Gwathmey, who afterwards joined the Confederates. It took him five days to cover the distance, and the reinforcement of Fort Pickens was delayed by that much.

The department could hardly tell whom to trust, but Lieut. John L. Worden was chosen to carry an order to Adams for the landing of the troops; and no mistake was made in his case, for he was the Worden who afterward

commanded the *Monitor*. He reached Pensacola on April 11th, and on telling Gen. Braxton Bragg, of the Confederate forces, that he had an oral order for the captain of the *Brooklyn*, was allowed to go off to her on the 12th. He had committed the order to memory and destroyed the document. That night, April 12, 1861, Fort Pickens was reinforced. Bragg had planned an attack on Fort Pickens for the night of the 13th—an attack that must have succeeded, because the Union force had been only eighty-three men, all told; but when the artillerymen and the marines were landed the face of matters was changed and the attack postponed indefinitely. The flag has never ceased to float over Fort Pickens. The Confederates were greatly exasperated, and Worden was arrested in Montgomery and held a prisoner for seven months.

In September the general dulness of affairs about Pensacola was relieved by a brilliant dash which a force from the blockader *Colorado* made into the harbor. The Confederates had been strengthening their works along shore gradually, and had at last started fitting out a schooner called the *Judah* at the navy yard for use as a privateer. This schooner was guarded by a ten-inch columbiad (a columbiad being a gun half-way between a carronade and a long gun) and a field-piece, both

being placed to sweep her deck. There was also a large force of men camped in the yard —some accounts say 1,000—while the schooner had a full crew on board, with a long pivot gun and two broadside guns in place. It is a remarkable fact that the yard where she was fitted and the schooner herself were within easy range and plain sight of Fort Pickens, and the fact that she intended to sail out after American merchant ships was obvious. But not a shot was fired from the fort to disturb her owners or the workmen.

John G. Sproston.

(Who commanded one of the boats in the attack on the *Judah*.)

From a photograph at the Naval Academy, Annapolis.

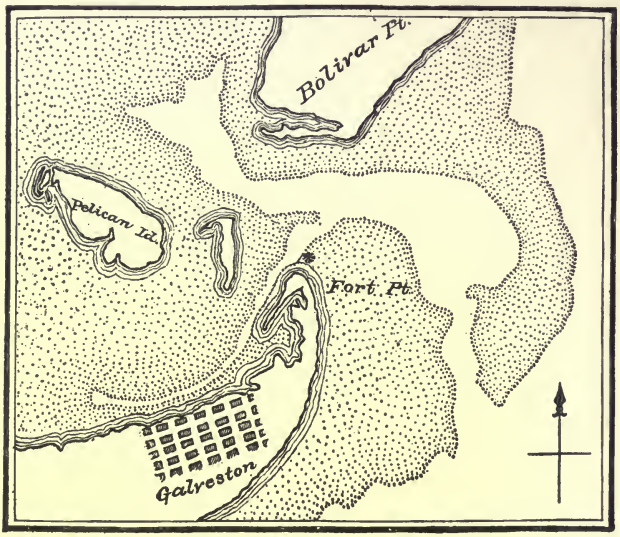
So Commodore William Marvine, commanding the Gulf squadron, sent 100 men in boats under Lieut. J. H. Russell, on the night of September 13, 1861, to destroy her. In spite of the vigilance of the Confederates, they arrived near the schooner undiscovered, and were entirely suc-

cessful in firing her, in spite of a determined opposition.

Meantime a wave of trouble had rolled over Galveston, Texas—a wave that stirred the foreign consuls living there into an astonishing state of anger, and through their efforts it was used with some effect to misrepresent and prejudice the case of the government throughout Europe. The affair occurred on August 3, 1861. Galveston was first blockaded by the *South Carolina*, Capt. James Alden, in the latter part of June. Captain Alden "never had any intention of troubling" the people of the city further than interrupting their ocean trade, and this determination was stated to them in an official communication. Nevertheless, the Confederates erected a number of batteries in a place where any attack on them by the blockading squadron would necessarily result in throwing projectiles into the city. A glance at the map will show that Galveston is built on the northerly point of an island that forms the harbor. The city faces the bay, and there is a wide stretch of sand behind the city —that is, between the city and the sea. It was between the city and the sea that the batteries were placed.

On the morning of August 3d a tender of the blockading ship was returning north from a cruise to the south end of Galveston Island.

She passed within range of the batteries, and they opened fire on her. She returned the fire and reported it to Captain Alden, who "waited all day for some explanation or disavowal on the part of the authorities." He



Galveston Harbor.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

could scarcely realize that people "could be so insane as to initiate hostilities when their town was so completely at our mercy." At 4 o'clock no disavowal having come, he took the *South Carolina* within a mile of the works. The Confederates opened fire on her and Alden replied with fifteen shots, after which,

finding that he could not prevent the shot going into the city as well as the works, he withdrew.

The next day Mr. Arthur Lynn, the British consul, gathered together the Hanoverian and Oldenburg consul, the Swiss consul, the Mexican consul; the deputy consul for Bremen, Saxony, Belgium, and Holland; the consul *pro tem.* for Electoral Hesse, and the consul for Nassau, besides representatives of some other countries, and wrote and signed the following:

"The undersigned, consuls and vice-consuls at Galveston, consider it their duty to enter their solemn protest against your bombardment of this city on the evening of the 3d instant, without having given any notice, so that the women and children might have been removed, and also against your firing a shell in the midst of a large crowd of unarmed citizens, amongst whom were many women and children, causing thereby the death of an unoffending Portuguese and wounding boys and peaceably disposed persons, as acts of inhumanity, unrecognized in modern warfare, and meriting the condemnation of Christian and civilized nations."

A copy of the protest was sent to Alden, another to the reporters, of course, and then each official sent one under seal to his govern-

ment in such fashion that it would appear in the papers there also.

It was a small affair in itself. The Confederate authorities made no protest about it. So far as the attack on the blockading squadron and the return of the fire were of interest from a historical point of view, the matter was not worth mention. But because this was the first case in which a British consul, acting in his official capacity, undertook the work of misrepresenting the deeds of the government officers, it may not be omitted. For the official attitude of the European governments has a very important part in the naval history of the Civil War.

The next event of interest that occurred in the Gulf region might very well be termed the battle of Bull Run afloat, because a squadron of American naval ships became involved in a panic and fled precipitately before a force so utterly insignificant that the shame of it was felt by every man who wore the uniform.

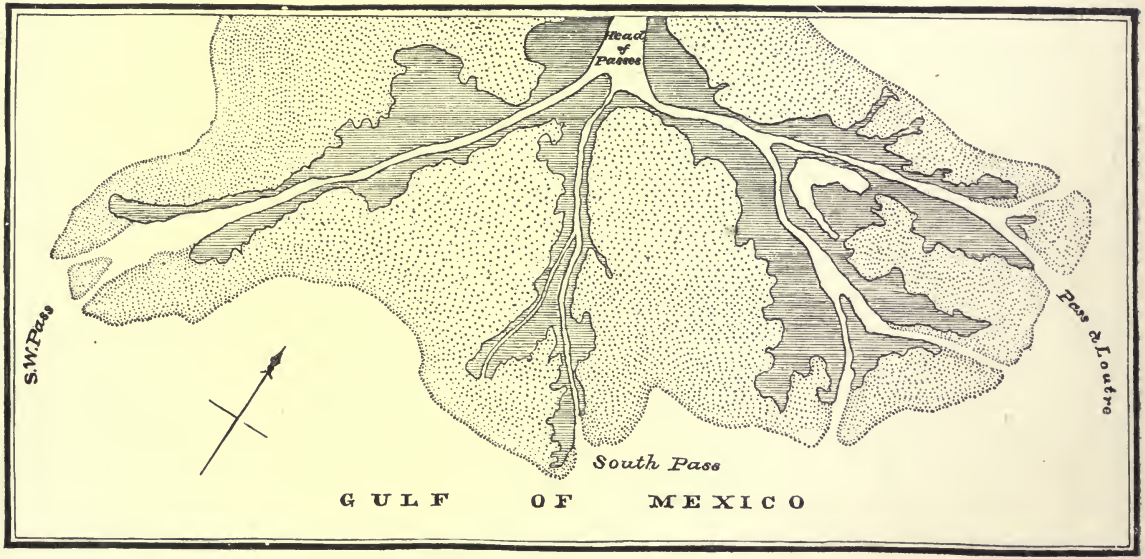
The mouths of the Mississippi were at first blockaded by the *Brooklyn*, Captain Poor, and the *Powhatan*, Capt. D. D. Porter, but when the *Powhatan* was away, one day, the *Brooklyn* went chasing a strange sail, and the watchful Semmes carried the *Sumter*, the first of the noted Confederate cruisers, out to sea. As the Confederates had before this carried

fifteen ships, two barks, and three schooners from the Gulf to New Orleans as prizes, the government was moved to place a sufficient force in the river to close it absolutely.

This force included the flagship *Richmond*, a screw steamer of 2,000 tons, carrying twenty large guns, Capt. John Pope; the sailing sloop-of-war *Vincennes*, ten guns, Capt. Robert Handy; the sailing sloop-of-war *Preble*, eleven guns, Capt. H. French, and the little screw steamer *Water Witch*, of four guns (howitzers). In all, there were forty-five guns in the squadron, of which twenty were nine-inch Dahlgrens.

As the reader will remember, a chart of the mouth of the Mississippi is marvellously like a picture of the roots of a crooked tree. The waters divide into three main channels, with a host of offshoots. To effectually close all the entrances to the river it was necessary only to anchor the squadron in the river itself above the point where it was split up, and this was done. There were no Confederate forts near the anchorage, and the officers and men, so far as is known, possessed their souls in peace until the month of October.

Meantime the Confederates had been working against very great difficulties to prepare a squadron fit to clear the river. They had incidentally striven to get a steamer called the *McRae* in commission for a cruiser, but had



Passes of the Mississippi.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

failed in making her machinery work well, and she was relegated to the work of harbor defence.

The work of shipbuilding was done under the eyes of a commission that included Capt. L. Rousseau, Commander E. Farrand, and Lieut. Robert J. Chapman, of the Confederate navy, all of whom had been reared in the government navy. Capt. George N. Hollins, formerly of the American navy, was assigned to command the fleet when built.

By the first of October, four river steamers had been converted into the semblance of gunboats by adding timbers so that they could carry eight or nine guns. They were called the *Polk*, the *Ivy*, the *Livingston*, and the *Maurepas*. A merchant steamer with a bark rig became the *McRae*. To this was added a most remarkable vessel—the first of her class, the ironclad ram *Manassas*.

The *Manassas* was originally the double-screw tug *Enoch Train*, of Boston. She was 128 feet long, twenty-six wide, and when loaded she drew thirteen feet of water. She was, in short, a tug of the first class in size. Capt. John A. Stevenson, of New Orleans, undertook the contract of making a ram of this vessel for a company of capitalists who determined to use her, privateer-fashion, against the government blockaders immediately after

the Confederate Congress enacted a law on May 21, 1861, binding the Confederate treasury to pay to the destroyers twenty per cent. of the value of any government ships that might be destroyed by volunteers.

The tug was cut down almost to the water, first of all, and then her bow was filled in solid with timbers for a space of twenty feet abaft the stem. A deck in the shape of half of a long, sharp egg was built over her, twelve-inch oak timbers being used for the purpose. Of course, all the woodwork was thoroughly bolted. Then the bow and the rounded deck were everywhere plated with flat bar-iron one and a half inches thick. There was one gun-port forward, where a sixty-eight-pounder was mounted, but for some fault of construction they were not able to use it at first.

For motive power she had one compound engine and two screws, the high-pressure cylinder working one shaft and the low-pressure the other. There was but one hatch, a small one, at that, and through this everything—coal, supplies, men—must pass. A ship like that, no matter what her power, could never be popular in any navy in time of peace, but she was built for an emergency, and there was no trouble in finding a crew. Lieut. Alexander F. Warley, formerly in the government service, took command of her for her owners.

From time to time the government officers on the blockaders down at the head of the passes heard about the work in the New Orleans ship-yards. They learned some of the details of the ram that was building, as well as of the gunboat, but they not only did not make any preparations for meeting or guarding against an attack: they did not even consider what might be done if the Confederates should come.

At 3.30 o'clock on the morning of October 13, 1861, the government fleet lay quietly at anchor, save that the schooner *Joseph H. Toone* was alongside the *Richmond*, and the *Richmond's* watch on deck were taking coal out of her. The *Preble* was in advance—that is, was further up the river than any. Below her lay the flagship *Richmond*, and below her the *Vincennes*, while the *Water Witch* lay between the *Richmond* and the east shore, with a little prize schooner, the *Frolic*, near by. It was a moonlight night, with some clouds flying, the worst kind of a night, as all seamen know, for seeing anything clearly, but there had been no especial care in posting or warning lookouts. It was with the squadron literally "the careless end of night." Within ten minutes after the bell struck the hour of 3.30, a lookout on the *Preble* saw a dark object driving down the river, but without any smoke or

steam or other appearance of motive power. At nearly the same moment the lookout on the prize schooner saw it, and as the alarm was raised on the *Preble* the schooner lookout bawled to *Richmond:* "A rebel steamer is coming down the river."

In a minute the whole squadron awoke, and with rattle and shout the crews ran to quarters, but before they could get a gun cast loose, the dark object afloat, the ram *Manassas*, driving with the aid of the current at about nine miles an hour, glanced across the coal schooner's bow, crashed through a cutter, and struck the *Richmond* "abreast of the port forechannels, tearing the schooner from her fasts." "Three planks on the ship's side were stove in, about two feet below the water-line, making a hole about five inches in *circumference.*" These quotations are from Pope's official report, but the report did not use italics.

Immediately "a red light was shown as a signal of danger," and then the whole squadron except the *Water Witch* slipped their cables and fled. "I ordered the *Preble* and *Vincennes* to proceed down the Southwest Pass," says Pope, and "they did." Meantime, "after the first blow given to this ship by the ram," it "remained under our port quarter, apparently endeavoring to fix herself in a position to give us a second blow, but the slipping

of our chain and the ship ranging ahead under steam frustrated the object." That was Pope's idea. The fact was that the ram's machinery had not been properly stayed to sustain a shock, and the blow had entirely crippled the low-pressure engine, and left her with barely enough power to stem the current. She lay there making repairs, with her crew in a state of alarm lest she be disabled altogether. However, they got the high-pressure engine working independently, and then, to the great relief of her crew, she went creeping and coughing up the river, hugging the shoal water lest the *Richmond* or *Water Witch* pursue her after she had passed them. Both the *Richmond* and the *Preble* fired broadsides at her; the *Richmond* fired three, "with what effect it was impossible to discover owing to the darkness," but "some officers are of opinion they heard shot strike the ram." As the ram disappeared up the river, the *Richmond's* "helm was put up, and the ship rapidly fell off, presenting her broadside up and down the river." In that position they let her drift with the current to "cover the retreat" of the squadron.

A squadron of four great ships, armed with forty-five first-class guns, had been driven into a shameful panic by one crippled tug carrying a gun that couldn't be fired.

At about this time a rocket was thrown up

from the ram, and at once three lights were seen—"three large fire rafts, stretching across the river, were rapidly nearing us, while several *large* steamers and a bark-rigged propeller were seen astern of them." In the minds of the flying officers the peril was frightful. Nevertheless, as the *Richmond* "drifted near the Passes ineffectual attempts were made to get her head upstream." The attempts did not include the dropping of an anchor, because that would have stopped her in her flight for the sea. Pope was willing to head upstream provided he could keep travelling away from the fearsome ram and fire-rafts "stretching across the river." When the "ineffectual attempts" were stopped "I found myself a mile and a half down the Southwest Pass." "I then put the helm up, and continued down the river, hoping to be able to get her head around off Pilot Town. In doing this she drifted some distance below, grounding broadside on."

Meantime the *Vincennes* and the *Preble* had been "drifting" also, and without making any attempts to get their bows pointed upstream. They were under sail, and the wind was in the north. The *Preble* outran the *Richmond*, even. Captain French says that as he passed the *Richmond* Captain Pope told him to "proceed down the pass." He obeyed, and after bumping on the bar two or three times, crossed

over into water unfretted by rams and fire-rafts. So he "anchored near the coal ships *Kuhn* and *Nightingale* to protect them if necessary."

Meantime the *Vincennes*, like the *Richmond*, had grounded in the pass, and a little later along came the *Water Witch*. She had found, as she steamed down the pass, "that the *fire rafts* were drifting with the wind steadily over toward the western shore," so the "*Water Witch* was now steered to the northward and eastward (upstream) and easily cleared them." The river at this "time in the vicinity of the passes was entirely clear of the enemy." Nevertheless, a "*general signal*, 'cross the bar,'" was displayed on the *Richmond*.

The effect of this signal on Captain Handy of the *Vincennes* is well-nigh past belief. He read it "abandon the ship," he says, but he was not quite sure about the reading, and so sent a boat to the *Water Witch* to ask how Captain Winslow read it. Captain Winslow replied "that it was impossible" an order to abandon the ship had been given. Captain Handy was of his original opinion still, and at once ordered the boats away. A slow match was set to the magazine, and then, as the crew started over the side of the ship, Captain Handy wrapped the ship's flag about him in broad folds and climbed down the ladder to his gig.

Fortunately, a quarter-gunner (whose name has not been preserved, alas!) slipped down below, and cutting off the burning end of the slow match, tossed it overboard. Two of the boats went to the *Water Witch*, but the others, including the gig, to the *Richmond*. Here Handy's theatrical air left him. The utter disgust of his crew became manifest after it was told that the slow match had been cut, and Handy was sent back crestfallen to his ship. But, though crestfallen, he was as nerveless as ever.

Of course daylight had come long before the time the two ships had grounded, and the Confederates, who had followed their fire-rafts with the bark-rigged *McRae* and the four converted gunboats and a river tug, found, to their astonishment, the whole river clear. They had hoped, at first, to make some disturbance—possibly to sink the *Richmond* with the ram—and, at any rate, get the *McRae* to sea. But the *McRae's* engines had failed, and so had the ram's, while the fire-rafts had drifted ashore harmless. And yet there were the government ships out at sea, or aground inside and sorry they couldn't get away. Very naturally the Confederates came down where their long-range Whitworth rifles would take effect, and opened fire on the grounded ships. The only damage done was when a shell lodged in

the locker where Captain Pope kept his linen. Fortunately, the shell did not explode, and the linen was not wholly destroyed. The *Richmond* replied with a nine-inch gun on her forecastle, and the Confederates, having boats so frail that one shell could have sunk any one of them, were obliged to keep at long range. The *Water Witch* was sent in great haste to bring the *South Carolina* from Barrataria, and after she came to the rescue the transport *McClellan* also arrived with rifles for the *Richmond.* "My mind was very much relieved, knowing that the armament of four rifled guns on board the *McClellan*, together with the long gun of the *South Carolina*, would keep the enemy at bay," says Pope in his report. Imagine the state of mind of this officer! "Four rifled guns on board the *McClellan*, together with the long gun of the *South Carolina*, would keep the enemy *at bay!*"

But before the relief ships arrived, Captain Handy, of the *Vincennes*, had once more become so nervous he couldn't stand the strain without doing something. The Confederates were firing at the *Richmond;* but they might fire at him and he might get hurt. So he wrote a note to the already overwrought Pope. Because no other case of the kind is known to the annals of the American navy, because the exhibit forms an interesting study

in mental phenomena, and because the shame of it, when spread in history, must serve to make a repetition of the story impossible, the note shall be given in full :

"SIR : We are aground. We have only two guns that will bear in the direction of the enemy. Shall I remain on board after the moon goes down, with my crippled ship and worn-out men ? Will you send me word what countersign my boats shall use if we pass near your ship ? While we have moonlight, would it not be better to leave the ship ? Shall I burn her when I leave her ?

"Respectfully,
ROBERT HANDY."

He was not allowed to abandon his ship again, but it is a fact, incredible as it may seem, that even after the *South Carolina* had come —the *South Carolina* that, single-handed, was of a force to have destroyed, with one watch in their hammocks, the whole Confederate squadron—even after she had come, Handy, in his haste to get clear, threw overboard all of his guns, and it was done by permission of Pope. So the *Vincennes* got away in tow of the steamers.

On the 14th they were all at anchor outside, but even here, according to Captain Pope's report, Captain French, of the *Preble*, did not feel safe. He was ordered to block-

ade Pass à Loutre, but, after starting, came back and asked permission to go to Ship Island for wood for the galley fire. Pope told him there was wood a-plenty at the Northeast Pass, but he "earnestly requested to go to Ship Island," and Pope "reluctantly consented." At Ship Island the *Preble* would be safe, but there was no telling what might happen if she were caught all alone by a Confederate gunboat off Pass à Loutre.

And then, in his report, written on the 17th, Pope makes this statement: "My retreat down the pass, although painful to me, was to save the ships by preventing them being sunk and falling into the hands of the enemy; and it was evident to me they had us in their power."

This one other quotation will complete the story: "It having been rumored there was a panic on board this ship at the time she was engaged with the enemy, I state it to be false; both officers and men exhibited the utmost coolness and determination to do their duty."

This chapter shall conclude with the brief story of brave men at Galveston.

It was in November. The frigate *Santee* was blockading Galveston, and a Confederate steamer, the *General Rusk*, was inside, together with a privateer schooner called the *Royal Yacht*. The Confederates were fitting the

Rusk for a cruiser, but she could not be shelled without throwing shot into the city. So Lieut. James E. Jouett volunteered to go in and cut her out.

One has to look at the chart of the harbor to appreciate the danger of the service, for the boats would have to pull around the north end of the island, on which the city stands, and then along the water front of the city itself, to reach the ship. Nevertheless, Jouett, with forty men in two boats, started at 11.40 o'clock on the night of November 7, 1861. Everything went well while passing the sentinels on the point, and those on the *Royal Yacht* that lay near the point, also. But in keeping well to the off side of the channel when approaching the city the leading boat grounded, and the second crashed into her. The noise of the collision and the efforts to get afloat betrayed them, and fire was opened from the land and the *Rusk*. There was nothing for it but to retreat. The forty men could do nothing against the forces of the Confederates, now that they were alarmed. But Jouett was not to be balked altogether, and turning about, he dashed at the *Royal Yacht*. The first boat to reach her had a twelve-pound howitzer in its bow, with Gunner William W. Carter in charge. Aiming at her water-line Carter fired just as the boat's bow was within

jumping distance of the schooner, and as the shell crashed through the schooner's side he leaped to her deck. Unfortunately, the recoil of the howitzer drove the boat away from the schooner, leaving Carter, with cutlass in hand, alone to face the enemy. But Carter was the man for the place, and at them he went, slash and parry and thrust, while Jouett slewed the boat up once more to the schooner's rail and leaped on board. But the moment he landed there a Confederate thrust a bayonet through his arm and into his lung. It was a dangerous wound, but Jouett cut the man down and hewed his way to Carter's side.

Even then the fight was not won. Twice the Confederates rallied and drove the Federals back, but Jouett led on again, gained the victory at last, and destroyed the schooner. The Federals lost three killed and six wounded. They carried off thirteen prisoners, but the Confederate loss in killed and wounded is not recorded. And it is worth adding that Jouett is to be heard from further on.

CHAPTER VII

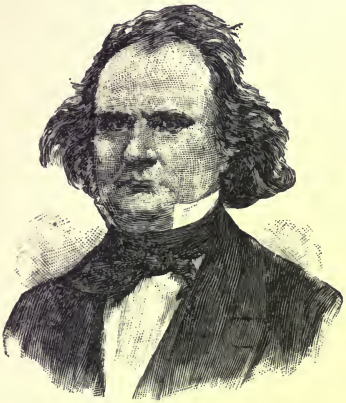
STORY OF THE TRENT AFFAIR

CAPT. CHARLES WILKES, OF THE AMERICAN NAVY, TOOK FOUR CONFEDERATE DIPLOMATIC AGENTS FROM A BRITISH SHIP BOUND ON A REGULAR VOYAGE BETWEEN NEUTRAL PARTS, AND WITHOUT ANY JUDICIAL PROCEEDING CAST THEM INTO A MILITARY PRISON—A CASE THAT CREATED GREAT EXCITEMENT THROUGHOUT THE CIVILIZED WORLD—A SWIFT DEMAND, WITH A THREAT OF WAR ADDED, MADE BY THE BRITISH—COMPARING THIS CASE WITH ANOTHER OF LIKE NATURE—THE UNITED STATES ONCE WENT TO WAR TO ESTABLISH THE PRINCIPLE WHICH CAPTAIN WILKES IGNORED—THE BRITISH OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE AMERICANS WERE JUSTIFIED IN DECLARING WAR IN 1812.

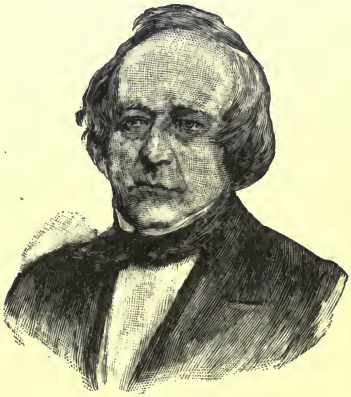
THIS is to tell the story of what is known, in the history of the Civil War, as the Trent affair. And it is worth saying in advance that few, if any, events that have occurred on the high seas are of more interest to the American patriot than this. For not only did it involve the capture and subsequent release of two very important enemies of the American government in time of war; it settled forever in our favor the troublesome question that drove the American people into the War of 1812. There was, indeed, what may rightly be called an official declaration, on the part of

the Prime Minister of Great Britain, that the United States was entirely justified in that war.

On the 12th of October, 1861, Mr. James Mason, of Virginia, and Mr. John Slidell, of Louisiana, with two other gentlemen, acting as their secretaries, sailed from Charleston in



James Murray Mason.



John Slidell.

The two captured commissioners.

the blockade-runner *Theodora*, and, "unimpeded by the blockading ships," arrived at Cardenas, Cuba, whence they proceeded to Havana. Mr. Mason had, in former years, been chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and American Minister in Paris. Mr. Slidell had represented the United States at the capital of Mexico. These two gentlemen had been chosen by the Confed-

erates to go to Europe as special representatives—Mr. Mason to England and Mr. Slidell to Paris—to secure, if possible, the recognition of the Confederate States as a nation. It is important to note that these special envoys were sent because three others previously sent had failed. "Lord Russell had received them (the three) on the footing of private gentlemen and listened to what they had to say, but had avoided correspondence, and remained immovable in his refusal to enter into any official communication. At the French court they had been equally unsuccessful," and the Confederates hoped that Messrs. Mason and Slidell would do better.

On the day that these Confederate envoys arrived in Havana the United States cruiser *San Jacinto*, Capt. Charles Wilkes, was at Cienfuegos, on the south side of Cuba, looking for the Confederate cruiser *Sumter*—Wilkes, by the way, being the officer who conducted the celebrated Wilkes expedition to the southern seas, of which mention is made elsewhere.

While at Cienfuegos, Wilkes heard of the arrival of the *Theodora* on the north coast, and made haste ineffectually to reach Havana to intercept her. But while he failed to catch the *Theodora* he learned at Havana that the Confederate envoys were to sail in the Royal

Charles Wilkes.

From an engraving by Dodson of the portrait by Sully.

mail line steamer *Trent* for the island of St. Thomas, where, in the regular course of the line's business, they would be transferred to a

steamer bound to England. Having failed to learn when the *Trent* would sail—failed because of "the notorious action of her British Majesty's subjects in doing everything to aid and abet the escape of these four persons"—Wilkes went to "where the old Bahama Channel contracts to the width of fifteen miles, some 240 miles from Havana, and in sight of the Paredon del Grande lighthouse." The *Trent* must pass through that neck of water, and "at 11.40 on the 8th her smoke was seen." "We were all prepared for her, beat to quarters, and orders were given to Lieut. D. M. Fairfax to have two boats manned and armed to board her and make Messrs. Slidell, Mason, Eustis, and McFarland prisoners, and send them on board." Eustis and McFarland were the secretaries. "The steamer approached and hoisted English colors, our ensign was hoisted, and a shot was fired across her bow; she maintained her speed and showed no disposition to heave to; then a shell was fired across her bow, which brought her to. I hailed that I intended to send a boat on board, and Lieutenant Fairfax, with the second cutter of this ship, was despatched." The quotations are from official reports.

On arriving beside the *Trent*, Fairfax went on board alone, "leaving two officers in the boat with orders to wait until it became neces-

sary to show some force." He met the captain on the quarter-deck and asked "to see the passenger list," but "he declined letting me see it." Fairfax then said he had learned that the Confederate envoys were on board, and should satisfy himself "whether they were on board before allowing the steamer to proceed."

"Mr. Slidell, evidently hearing his name mentioned, came up to me and asked if I wanted to see him. Mr. Mason soon joined us, and then Mr. Eustis and Mr. McFarland, when I made known the object of my visit. The captain of the *Trent* opposed anything like the search of his vessel, nor would he consent to show papers or passenger list." This is from the report of Lieutenant Fairfax, and it adds that "there was considerable noise among the passengers just about this time." The fact is the passengers were, to a man, in ardent sympathy with the Confederates. "The passengers and ship's officers were making all kinds of disagreeable and contemptuous noises and remarks." "Did you ever hear of such an outrage?" and "Did you ever hear of such a piratical act?" were two of the expressions that were heard by the officers waiting in the boat. "Mr. Fairfax appeared to be having an altercation with some one," and at last one waiting officer "heard some one call out, 'Shoot him!'"

At this some armed marines were sent on board, and when they "advanced the passengers fell back." The most insolent of all on board was a retired commander of the British navy, who was in charge of the mails. According to Lieut. James A. Greer, "the mail agent, (a man in the uniform of a commander in the royal navy, I think,) was very indignant and talkative, and tried several times to get me into discussion of the matter. I told him I was not there for that purpose. He was very bitter; he told me that the English squadron would raise the blockade in twenty days after his report of this outrage (I think he said outrage) got home; that the northerners might as well give up now," etc., etc. The Confederate envoys, in their letter to Captain Wilkes, say that "it must be added here, omitted in the course of the narration, that before the party left the upper deck an officer of the *Trent*, named Williams, in the naval uniform of Great Britain, and known to the passengers as having charge of the mails and accompanying them to England, said to the lieutenant that, as the only person present directly representing his government, he felt called upon, in language as strong and as emphatic as he could express, to denounce the whole proceeding as a piratical act."

Further than that, "nearly all the officers

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of the vessel showed an undisguised hatred for the northern people, and a sympathy for the Confederates. I will do the captain of the vessel the justice to say that he acted differently from the rest, being, when I saw him, very reserved and dignified. The officers and men of our party took no apparent notice of the remarks that were made, and acted with the greatest forbearance."

However, in spite of the bluster and the determination of the envoys to go only when compelled to do so by force, the four were taken on board the American warship. The force used was not violence, of course. "Three officers laid their hands on an envoy, after which the envoy walked down a ladder to the boat." It is conceded on all hands that Lieutenant Fairfax and his men acted in a manner entirely becoming to gentlemen of the navy.

Having taken the Confederate envoys, Captain Wilkes permitted the *Trent* to proceed on her voyage. He says:

"It was my determination to have taken possession of the *Trent*, and sent her to Key West as a prize, for resisting the search and carrying these passengers, whose character and objects were well known to the captain; but the reduced number of my officers and crew, and the large number of passengers on board, bound to Europe, who would be put to great

inconvenience, decided me to allow them to proceed."

It is worth noting, as illustrating the character of Wilkes and his officers, that they were absolutely certain that if they took the ship to Key West she would be sold as a good prize for a sum that would have given many thousand dollars to the *San Jacinto's* crew. But for the sake of the convenience of the passengers, they allowed her to go on.

After the *Trent* started on her way to St. Thomas, the *San Jacinto* headed for Boston. "Why he did not go into New York or Hampton Roads, where he could have communicated with the Government, is unexplained, but the information of the capture was kept from the Department four days longer than it should have been."

But when at last he did reach port, and the news of the capture was given to the reporters, the whole North went wild with joy, and the rest of the civilized world, and especially Great Britain, was stirred as rarely, if ever before, by the capture of an envoy. Even Secretary of the Navy Welles lost his head and officially wrote to Wilkes: "Your conduct in seizing these public enemies was marked by intelligence, ability, decision, and firmness, and has the emphatic approval of this department." As for the people of Boston, it may be said that

not in all the years since the War of 1812 had they made such demonstrations over a naval officer. Even Hull, with the *Guerrière* crew on board the *Constitution*, did not receive so much banqueting; and Congress passed enthusiastically a resolution requesting the President to give Wilkes a gold medal.

To the writer hereof it seems that the story of all this excitement is worth careful consideration, not so much because it was incited by the capture of two enemies of the flag, but because it was an expression of feeling against the British. For the capture of Mason and Slidell could not harm the Confederates greatly. There were other statesmen in the South to take their place. But they had been taken from a British ship, and the people at the North then believed that the British government, while publicly professing friendship for their cause, was secretly doing everything possible to aid the South. The enthusiasm over Wilkes appears to have been in good part a protest against what was then called British hypocrisy and enmity for the North. So great was this enthusiasm, that for a man to openly express the opinion that a grave mistake had been made was to incur the most rabid denunciations—to be called a "copperhead" and a "traitor" and a "toady."

Meantime the British were, as said, but lit-

tle less excited than the Americans, though for quite a different reason. A British packet ship had been assaulted on the high seas while making her usual voyage between neutral ports, and the people—especially the seafaring people—wanted to know what their government was going to do about it. As a matter of fact, they did not have to wait long to learn.

"Richard Williams, Commander R.N., and Admiralty agent in charge of mails" on the *Trent*, made his report under date of November 9th, and this in due time reached Lord Russell, the British Prime Minister. A Cabinet meeting was called to consider the matter, and on November 30, 1861, Russell sent a despatch to Lord Lyons, the British Minister at Washington, of which the following are the important paragraphs:

"It thus appears that certain individuals have been forcibly taken from on board a British vessel, the ship of a neutral Power, while such vessel was pursuing a lawful and innocent voyage, an act of violence which was an affront to the British flag, and a violation of international law.

"Her Majesty's Government, bearing in mind the friendly relations which have long subsisted between Great Britain and the United States, are willing to believe that the United States' naval officer who committed this aggression

was not acting in compliance with any authority from his Government, or that, if he conceived himself to be so authorized, he greatly misunderstood the instructions which he had received.

"For the Government of the United States must be fully aware that the British Government could not allow such an affront to the national honour to pass without full reparation, and Her Majesty's Government are unwilling to believe that it could be the deliberate intention of the Government of the United States unnecessarily to force into discussion between the two Governments a question of so grave a character, and with regard to which the whole British nation would be sure to entertain such unanimity of feeling."

In another letter of the same date Lord Russell added the following, setting a time limit with instructions in case the British demand was not allowed:

"In my previous despatch of this date I have instructed you, by command of Her Majesty, to make certain demands of the Government of the United States.

"Should Mr. Seward ask for delay in order that this grave and painful matter should be deliberately considered, you will consent to a delay not exceeding seven days. If, at the end of that time, no answer is given, or if any

other answer is given except that of a compliance with the demands of Her Majesty's Government, your Lordship is instructed to leave Washington with all the members of your Legation, bringing with you the archives of the Legation, and to repair immediately to London."

These were the public official orders to Lord Lyons; but in order to set forth accurately the condition of affairs, it is necessary to quote from a letter of private instructions in which, as it now appears, Lord Russell, while determined to enforce the British demand for reparation, was anxious "to mitigate the effect of their peremptory demand." He said:

"The despatches which were agreed to at the Cabinet yesterday, and which I have signed this morning, impose upon you a disagreeable task. My wish would be that at your first interview with Mr. Seward you should not take my despatch with you, but should prepare him for it, and ask him to settle with the President and the Cabinet what course they would propose.

"The next time you should bring my despatch and read it to him fully.

"If he asks what will be the consequence of his refusing compliance, I think you should say that you wish to leave him and the President quite free to take their own course, and

that you desire to abstain from anything like menace."

Although, as said, the patriotic Americans, as a whole, were greatly excited and incensed, there were many of them who did not share in these feelings, and among these were Secretary of State Seward. To set forth the reasons for this opposition to the opinions of their countrymen more forcibly, the following incident of the history of the Revolutionary War shall be told :

It appears that when that war was at its height "the colonial government despatched as ambassador to Holland, then a neutral power, Henry Laurens, a former President in the Congress of the country, vested with power to secure from that Government a recognition of the United Colonies as an independent nation—to conclude a treaty, and to negotiate a loan. In 1780 he left Charleston, on board the brigantine *Adriana*, bound to Martinique. From thence he took passage in a Dutch packet, the *Mercury*, for Holland, and thus was on board a neutral vessel, sailing between neutral ports.

"When three days out from Martinique, the *Mercury* was overhauled by the British frigate *Vestal*, Mr. Laurens, with his secretary, was forcibly removed from on board the *Mercury ;* his papers were seized ; they were taken in the *Vestal* to St. Johns, Newfoundland, and thence,

by an order of the British admiralty, he, with his secretary, was taken to England, and he was committed, as a prisoner, to the Tower of London, on a charge of high treason. The British reverse at Yorktown soon changed the character of his confinement to that of a prisoner of war, and he was, not long thereafter, released, in exchange for Lieutenant-general Lord Cornwallis."

The quotation is from Upton's "Maritime Warfare and Prize." No one familiar with this work will accuse Mr. Upton of lack of patriotism. The fact is that the case of Laurens, from a legal point of view, was precisely the case of Mason and Slidell. If the British were wrong in taking the American from a Dutch ship and treating him as a criminal in 1780, the Americans were wrong in taking the Confederate envoys from the British ship in 1861 and treating them as criminals.

But that is by no means the end of the story of the *Trent* affair. The demand of Great Britain was officially communicated to Secretary of State Seward on December 19th. On December 26th Mr. Seward delivered to Lord Lyons a reply reviewing the entire case. The important points of this reply are as follows:

The American government did not authorize the act of Captain Wilkes and knew nothing about it until Captain Wilkes arrived and

reported it. Captain Wilkes believed that what he had done was "a simple legal and customary belligerent proceeding to arrest and capture a neutral vessel engaged in carrying contraband of war for the use and benefit of the insurgents." The "four persons taken from the *Trent* by Captain Wilkes, and their despatches, were contraband of war." If the envoys were contraband, Captain Wilkes had a right, under the law of nations, to capture the *Trent*, but *the contraband "has a right to a fair trial of the accusation against him.*" "The neutral state that has taken him under its flag is bound to protect him, if he is not contraband, and is therefore entitled to be satisfied upon that important question." Both the accused and the neutral state have a right to demand "a tribunal and a trial." In the *Trent* case there was neither tribunal nor trial. Captain Wilkes constituted himself cap-

William H. Seward.
From a photograph.

tor, judge, and executioner. A very great wrong had been done. For this wrong "the British Government has a right to expect the same reparation that we, as an independent State, should expect from Great Britain or any other friendly nation in a similar case." "The four persons in question are now held in military custody at Fort Warren in the State of Massachusetts. They will be cheerfully liberated."

The comment of Commodore Joseph Smith on Seward's letter sums it up admirably. In a letter to Flag Officer Foote he says, "It is ingenious, *gassy*, too long, but able."

It is to be observed that the letter of Mr. Seward did not contain the word regret nor any form of apology. It stated the case and argued it, and admitted that an error—"simply an inadvertency," on the part of a naval officer—had been made, and agreed to deliver up the prisoners. Whether the Secretary should have expressed regret when he admitted the wrong, the reader can judge for himself. What Lord Russell thought about this point is not told in the documents, but what he said was that "Her Majesty's Government have arrived at the conclusion that they (the matters in Mr. Seward's letter) constitute the reparation which Her Majesty and the British nation had a right to expect."

Then, in another letter, he controverted

Mr. Seward's statements that the Confederate envoys made the *Trent* a good prize that might have been lawfully condemned. Of course no settlement of this question was reached, but whether Lord Russell or Mr. Seward was right, may be, perhaps, decided by the reader. At this writing there is trouble between Spain and the people of Cuba. If a Cuban agent escaped from Cuba to the United States and sailed from New York in an American liner for England, would the government of the United States permit a Spanish warship to carry the Yankee liner to Spain and there have her condemned as a prize? As this question must be answered in the negative, it is impossible to resist saying that in the *Trent* case the British government, instead of showing a spirit hostile toward the American government, was, in spite of the time limit, forbearing.

No direct reference to the British threat of war has been made so far, nor has the policy of adding to one's enemies, when one is already full of trouble, been mentioned. It was a question of right and wrong. If, on sober second thought, the whole American people had concluded that they were right, or if it had been manifest that it was necessary for the life of the nation to keep those Confederates, no threat of war and no attack from any

nation would have taken them from Fort Warren. It is an idle speculation; but most writers on this subject are sure that if Mason and Slidell had not been liberated the British would have declared war against us and so have set up the Confederate States as an independent government. But if the writer hereof may be allowed to express an opinion, he must say that, in spite of the seven days' limit, England was not quite ready to declare war. And it is by no means certain that if she had done so, the combination would have resulted as predicted. For the people of the United States were not in their last ditch, nor were they friendless in the world.

If one other point in this controversy be considered, the patriotic American can look upon the *Trent* case with unmixed pleasure. From 1783 until 1861—for seventy-eight weary years the American government had vainly striven with all the arts of diplomacy, and even with the argument of open war, to get from Great Britain a disavowal of her assumed right to search a neutral ship in time of war and take from it any persons whom one of her naval officers might decide to be British subjects—a renunciation of what the Prince Regent (afterward George IV) proclaimed at the palace of Westminster, in 1813, as the "*undoubted* and *hitherto undisputed* right of

searching merchant vessels in time of war, and the impressment of British seamen when found therein."

It was, indeed, not a very lively strife in the later years of this period, for Great Britain had abstained from exercising her "undoubted and hitherto undisputed right" as against American ships. But on November 8, 1861, an American captain, being not well informed in the causes of America's fights for life and liberty, undertook the very act that, when done by Great Britain, led to the War of 1812. He stopped a neutral ship on the high seas and took from her men whom he declared to be American citizens, and without any form of trial haled them away to a condition that was in law, if not in fact, exactly the condition of the impressed American seamen before the War of 1812. Great Britain had often taken advantage of such an act; she had in more than 6,000 cases, of which we have official knowledge, benefited by such doings on the part of her naval officers. But she had never suffered from such an aggression as that until November 8, 1861. There is no recorded act nor official utterance of the government of Great Britain during the first seventy-eight years of the existence of the United States that can be construed as a renunciation of the right of taking British subjects from neutral

ships in time of war; but when an American naval captain took an American subject from a British ship the British Prime Minister, with swift indignation, declared it "an act of violence which was an affront to the British flag and *a violation of international law.*" And that was not all. "The British Government could not allow such an affront to the national honour to pass without full reparation." Indeed, the affront was so great that the British Minister was to consent, for the purpose of consideration and negotiation, "to a delay not exceeding seven days."

The outrages perpetrated on American seamen in the old days have never been avenged; but because the British were at last willing to acknowledge in the most emphatic of official documents that the United States waged a just war in 1812, they may be forgiven.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CAPTURE OF PORT ROYAL

A FLEET OF SEVENTEEN SHIPS, CARRYING 155 GUNS, SENT TO TAKE A HARBOR THAT WOULD MAKE A CONVENIENT NAVAL STATION FOR THE ATLANTIC BLOCKADERS—THERE WERE TWO "EXCEEDINGLY WELL-BUILT EARTHWORKS" "RATHER HEAVILY ARMED" DEFENDING THE CHANNEL, BUT ONE PART OF THE SQUADRON ATTACKED THEM IN FRONT, ANOTHER ENFILADED THEM, AND IN LESS THAN FIVE HOURS THE CONFEDERATES FLED FOR LIFE —A HEAVY GALE WEATHERED WITH SMALL LOSS—INTERESTING INCIDENTS OF THE BATTLE.

WITHIN a month after the chief Confederate ports on the Atlantic coast had been blockaded, the imperative need of a nearby naval station, where ships could lie in a harbor and make repairs and take on coal, was manifest. To run away north from Charleston and Savannah to Hampton Roads, every time coal was needed, was something that could not be tolerated. For, as the reader will remember, the majority of the steamers of those days could carry no more coal than would last them for a week or ten days under steam. And what was worse, the machinery was always going wrong, even though steam-pressures were so low that steam-chests were known to burst in-

ward on the creation of a sudden vacuum. The capture of Hatteras Inlet, in a small measure supplied this want. Vessels drawing no more than thirteen feet of water could make a harbor there in any but the worst weather. But because the majority of the blockading ships drew much more than this, the government was compelled to provide a deeper port. Fortunately, "a harbor sufficient to contain the largest fleet in the world" lay right where it was needed. It was a little-known harbor, in those days, even among shipping merchants, for no great town overlooked its waters, and it was visited only by coasters. It lay within the State of South Carolina, about one-third of the distance from Savannah harbor to Charleston, and it was called very properly Port Royal. Although neglected entirely by commerce, it was really the best harbor on the Southern coast. The bar that guarded it lay well out at sea and had an ample depth of water over it. The channel between Hilton Head on the south and Bay Point on the north was a mile wide. Although "the land hereabouts is generally low, the trees are high," and "a small grove of trees, which tower above all the other trees like a high-crowned hat," marked the entrance to the harbor unmistakably, so that even a stranger could easily work his way in unless a gale prevailed.

Accordingly, the government decided to take possession of Port Royal, and in October, 1861, began to gather a fleet of warships and transports at Hampton Roads for that purpose. On October 10th Flag Officer Samuel Francis Dupont hoisted his flag on the steam frigate *Wabash*, of which Capt. C. R. P. Rodgers was commander. The squadron under him included the *Susquehanna*, Capt. J. L. Lardner; *Mohican*, Capt. S. W. Godon; *Seminole*, Capt. John P. Gillis; *Pocahontas*, Capt. Percival Drayton; *Pawnee*, Capt. R. W. Wyman; *Unadilla*, Capt. N. Collins; *Ottawa*, Capt. T. H. Stevens; *Pembina*, Capt. J. P. Bankhead; *Seneca*, Capt. Daniel Ammen, and the *Vandalia*, Capt. F. L. Haggerty. All of these were regular warships, and the *Vandalia* was the only sailing ship in the squadron. In addition to these, there were six merchant steamers that had been purchased and armed for use as

S. F. Dupont.

From a photograph.

warships. The warships proper carried 125 guns, all told, of which seven were eleven-inch Dahlgrens, and seventy-nine were eight-inch or better—most of them being nine-inch. The converted merchantmen carried from two to eight thirty-two-pounders each, save one, the *Isaac Smith*, which carried a rifled thirty-pounder. A force of soldiers, 12,000 strong, under Gen. Thomas W. Sherman, was detailed to coöperate with the squadron, and transports were provided to carry them, while coal-laden schooners were gathered in order to keep the steamers in fuel.

C. R. P. Rodgers.
From a photograph.

The older readers of this will remember very well the excitement occasioned throughout the nation by the gathering of this vast fleet at Hampton Roads. For the administration had determined to keep the destination of the expedition a secret, and it succeeded so well that

the mystery remained until after the fleet was gone.

On October 28th the *Vandalia* sailed away from Hampton Roads at the head of the coal fleet of twenty-five schooners, the schooner captains having been ordered to go to Tybee Bar, Savannah, in case they parted company. The next day, October 29, 1861, the squadron, the most powerful aggregation of fighting ships the United States had ever brought together, steamed slowly out of the Chesapeake and headed away to the South "after considerable delay in forming a double echelon line outside." All that night and all the next day the squadron was easily kept in hand, but during the next night the easterly breeze hardened and the seas began to grow. As the squadron passed Cape Hatteras, on the 31st of October, two of the transports touched on the Diamond Reef. No damage

S. W. Godon.

From a painting at the Naval Academy, Annapolis.

was done, but as the squadron continued down the coast the wind canted to the southeast, and before nightfall of Friday, November 1st, a hurricane was upon them. The flag officer gave orders for each captain to look out for himself, and at that the fleet slowly scattered as the ships were headed into the gale.

That was a night never to be forgotten by any landsman afloat in the fleet. As the seas rose the foam and spoondrift turned into tossing, phosphorescent flames that swept across the black water, adding terrors by their weird light to the fears already excited by the laboring of the ships. The warships were well found and able, of course, but a sorrier fleet of transports was never sent to sea, for it was composed in great part of inland water steamers, lighters, and ferryboats, and here they were trying to live in a Hatteras hurricane.

The first to suffer disaster was the transport *Governor*, a side-wheeler, carrying a battalion of marines, 700 strong. As night came on, the big arching timbers known as the hog-braces gave way one after another. The marines and the crew worked together to repair the damage, with partial success; but she rolled so heavily that her smokestack was pitched over the rail, and it was then impossible to keep a full head of steam on, and the pilot could no longer control her. In swinging off

into the trough of the sea, she was strained so badly that the seams were opened. The leak grew worse and the rudder chains parted, and there she lay, absolutely helpless and steadily filling with water, in spite of the labors of hundreds of willing men at the pumps and with buckets.

At last daylight came, and with it help. The sailing ship *Sabine*, Captain Ringgold, hove in sight. It was known that the ships were on soundings, and the *Sabine* anchored, with the *Governor* astern of her also at anchor. Then the *Sabine* paid out chain until she was near enough for a transfer of the men. Seven were killed by being caught between the ships or tumbling into the sea, but the rest were saved, with their arms. The *Governor* sank. The transport *Peerless* was also lost, but her people, twenty-six in number, were taken off by the *Mohican*, Captain Godon.

Off Charleston the squadron took the *Susquehanna* from the blockaders, and on Monday morning, November 4th, the flagship, with twenty-five other vessels of the fleet, came to anchor off the bar at Port Royal, and here they were eventually joined by all the others that survived the gale.

The storm was widespread, and the people at the North watched the clouds with an anxiety that was equalled by the hope of the

South. Moreover, it was the first great expedition the nation had undertaken, and the people were unused to war.

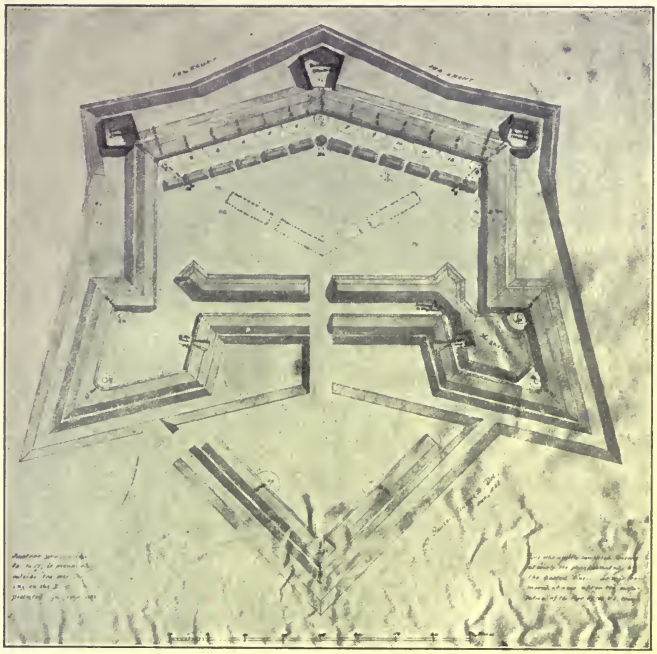
Meantime, some one in the confidence of the government had betrayed the secret, and on November 1st, two days after the fleet sailed, the Confederate Secretary of War telegraphed a warning to the forts at Port Royal and the Confederate fleet at Savannah. The Confederate squadron was under Commodore Josiah Tattnall, he who braved the fire of the Mexican works at Vera Cruz. "His flagship consisted of an old passenger St. John's steamer, mounting one 32-pound gun forward and one 18-pound gun aft. Then came two ancient, used-up tug-boats, each mounting one 32-pound gun; the next, a rotten North River cattle-boat, mounting one 18-pound gun; a dwarfish tug-boat from the James River, slightly armed, bringing up the rear."

Josiah Tattnall.

From an engraving by Hall.

It was a fleet in which machinery and men

were wholly unprotected and, for the purposes of war, was worthless. The Confederate forts were two in number—one, on Hilton Head, on the south side of the channel, called Fort



Plan of Fort Walker on Hilton Head.

From a drawing by R. Sturgis, Jr., in 1861.

Walker, and the other, on Bay Point, opposite, called Fort Beauregard. These two forts were two and five-eighths miles apart. As described by Scharf, "they were exceedingly well-built earthworks and were rather heavily armed,

Fort Walker mounting 23 guns and Fort Beauregard 18, a total of 41; but 22 of these were only 32-pounders or lighter pieces, so that there were in fact but 19 guns fit to cope with the at least 100 heavy rifles and shell-guns of the Federal ships. Gen. Thomas F. Drayton was in command of both posts, with his headquarters at Hilton Head, and Col. R. M. Dunovant had immediate command at Fort Beauregard. The defences were garrisoned by about 2,000 men, but this force was very deficient in trained artillerists, and a small supply of shot and shell forbade much practice with the larger guns."

John N. Maffit, a better authority on the Confederate side, says that "the construction of these works had been reprehensibly procrastinated until the ninth hour, when, in haste and confusion, raw troops, strangers to any ordnance above a 12-pound field piece, were hurried into the imperfectly-constructed earthworks to battle without drill or target practice against a masterly array of force.

"The excuse offered by the commanding general for neglecting to exercise and familiarize his artillerists with target-drill was the scarcity of ammunition. The commodore replied: 'Half the allowance spent in practice will more likely insure good results for the balance in fighting.'"

Within a few hours after the flagship reached the bar at Port Royal, all but two or three of the government force was safely anchored inside. They found that the channel marks had all been removed or placed to deceive. Capt. Charles H. Davis and Mr. Boutelle of the coast survey went in the coast survey steamer *Vixen* to replace the buoys, being guarded by five of the smaller warships. When this had been done four of the gunboats —the *Ottawa*, the *Seneca*, the *Pembia*, and the *Penguin*—anchored within three miles of Fort Walker.

Meantime Commodore Tattnall had brought his river-boat squadron through the inland waters to help defend Port Royal, and seeing the gunboats within reach, he made a dash at them, regardless of the character of his own ships. It was like Tattnall to do that; but he was fighting his own countrymen now, and not Mexicans or Chinese. Capt. T. H. Stevens, of the *Seneca*, who was senior officer, without waiting for orders from the flagship, got up anchor, and with the four gunboats headed in to meet the Confederates. Of course the encounter could have but one result, for the government force was much the greater, and after Lieut. Daniel Ammen had fired an eleven-inch shell into Tattnall's *Savannah*, Tattnall turned and ran. And that was the end of the offensive

warfare waged by that Confederate squadron.

The plan of attack chosen by Flag Officer Dupont was to divide his force into two squadrons. The first included the *Wabash*, the *Susquehanna*, the *Mohican*, the *Seminole*, the *Pawnee*, the *Unadilla*, the *Ottawa*, the *Pembina*, and the *Vandalia* in tow of the *Isaac Smith*, a steam gunboat that had been obliged to throw overboard all but one of her guns in the gale, and so was useless for any other purpose than that of a tug. The smaller squadron included the *Bienville*, the *Seneca*, the *Curlew*, the *Penguin*, and the *Augusta*, of which all but the *Seneca* were converted merchantmen carrying thirty-two-pounders; the *Seneca*, being armed with one eleven-inch Dahlgren and a twenty-pounder rifle, besides two howitzers, was the only one of much consequence for attacking an earthwork.

The larger squadron was to steam in past the fort on Hilton Head (on the south side of the channel), at a distance, when abreast, of 800 yards, and bombard it while passing in; the small squadron was to keep at the north side of the larger one and give such attention as it might at long range to Fort Beauregard over on the north side of the channel. When the forts had been passed, the larger squadron was to turn back and steam out past Hilton

Head, firing as before, while the little squadron remained in the harbor to head off any attack from Commodore Tatnall, and, what was of more importance as the event proved, to attack the forts from the rear.

For both forts had been planned to face the roadstead and open sea, and very little had been done to protect the landward faces from an attack from within the harbor.

An offshore gale of wind prevented an attack on the 6th, but the morning of the 7th came with scarcely a ripple on the sea, and at 9 o'clock the two squadrons of warships, in the order named, headed with a flood tide in close order to attack the fort on Hilton Head. They steamed along at six knots per hour, and at 9.26 o'clock precisely a puff of white smoke was seen on the parapet of the fort at the south. Instantly an answering puff was seen on Fort Beauregard at the north, and a round black ball from each came bounding over the smooth water, to fall short and sink out of sight. In a minute the *Wabash* replied with her two big ten-inch pivots, the *Susquehanna* followed with an eight-inch pivot, and in ten minutes more the whole fleet was engaged. A hundred huge shells were falling upon and around the fort, burying themselves for a moment in its walls, and then bursting and throwing great masses of sand in the air—masses of

sand that fell upon the gunners and the guns there.

But, though inexperienced in war, and but slightly trained in the handling of great guns, the men within the forts were a sturdy host, and fought back in a way that must excite the admiration of all who read the story. The ships were drawing nearer steadily, and there was need for rapid work. To bring one cartridge from the magazine every time a gun was to be loaded required too much time, and the gun's crews in the forts, regardless of the bursting shells that fell thickly around them, brought cartridges by the armful, and piled them beside the guns.

Nevertheless, they labored in vain. Fire as swiftly as they might and as accurately as they could, the majestic column of steamers passed in with the tide, unimpeded, until well within the harbor, when the longer column turned slowly around and came back, heading to pass this time within 600 yards instead of 800 as before. Sweeping out to sea, they came back again, passing once more at the shorter and more deadly range, and then a number of them came to anchor at a distance of 1,200 yards from the fort, and began a steady fire at a sure range, while "the *Vandalia*, in tow of the *Isaac Smith* by a long hawser, swept in long, graceful, but inconvenient curves past and among

Bombardment of Port Royal, S. C.

From an engraving by Ridgeway of a drawing by Parsons.

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these vessels. The *Unadilla*, whose machinery was disabled, pursued her eccentric orbit, her commanding officer hailing and requesting other vessels to get out of the way, as he 'could not stop.' As he swept by, again and again the droll song of the man with the cork leg that would not let him tarry was brought to mind." So says Ammen. But while the *Unadilla* amused the government forces she was not amusing the Confederates, for she kept her batteries working as relentlessly as her machinery worked.

And then came the steamer *Pocahontas*, under Capt. Percival Drayton, a Southern-born naval officer whose regard for his oath had prevented his deserting the flag. The *Pocahontas* had been delayed at sea by the great gale, but although she arrived too late to join in the procession, she ran in close to the beach southeast of the fort, and, stopping there, opened an enfilading fire. There was a single thirty-two-pounder on this flank of the fort, and Gen. Thomas Drayton, commanding the fort, had it trained on the *Pocahontas*. General Drayton on shore and Captain Drayton afloat, brothers, were firing on each other. But the gun ashore was knocked to pieces by a shot from the ship, and thereafter the fire of the *Pocahontas* began to drive the Confederates from their guns, for there were no trav-

erses between the guns to protect the men from an enfilading fire.

Meantime the smaller squadron left within opened an enfilading fire on both the Hilton Head fort and Fort Beauregard on the north side of the channel. "This enfilading fire on so still a sea annoyed and damaged us excessively," says General Drayton in his report. It became more annoying still as time passed, for the ebb tide began to run, and the gunboats were swept down until within 400 yards of the forts, and shots from even the howitzers began to tell with deadly effect. It was a storm that no force of men could stand. By 1.15 P.M., according to one account, and by 2 o'clock at the latest, "all but three of the guns on the water front had been disabled, and only 500 pounds of powder [remained] in the magazine" of the Hilton Head fort. The work of the fleet was done. The Confederates began to evacuate the fort on Hilton Head. Lookouts on the *Ottawa* were the first to see the men leaving the fort, and signals were soon flying to announce the fact. In a moment the *Pembina* was signalling the same story, while men who ran aloft on the *Wabash* hailed the deck to confirm the news.

At this the order to cease firing fluttered in the air. The *Wabash* and the *Susquehanna* steamed close in where their huge broadsides

Bombardment and Capture of Forts Walker and Beauregard, November 7, 1861.

From an engraving by Perine.

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would bear directly on the fort, and Capt. C. R. P. Rodgers was sent in a boat to make an examination.

"The entire fleet, now resting on its guns, watched the whaleboat pull out from the wing of the huge frigate and make its way like a cockleshell toward the grim and silent fort. Thousands of eyes centered on the little boat with increasing interest as she drew nearer the shore. Her keel soon grated on the beach, and the officers were seen to jump out, approach the fort and enter, and for a time they were lost to view. Then Commander Rodgers was seen scrambling up the highest part of the ramparts, carrying the American colors with him; and at the first glimpse of the beautiful ensign the long suspense gave place to tremendous cheers from every craft in the fleet." So says Maclay.

Although the main attack had been made on the Hilton Head fort, the one at the north had received attention at long range from the larger squadron, and the gunboats within the harbor had enfiladed it. It had suffered so much, in fact, that the troops abandoned it as soon as they saw that Hilton Head had surrendered. Vessels that were sent to reconnoitre found the flag down, and the next morning Capt. Daniel Ammen of the *Seneca* hoisted the American flag over the building that had

been used as headquarters there. Of his experience Ammen has written as follows:

"He went into the house without a suspicion of possible injury, and found everything had been removed. The earthworks and magazines were hastily examined, and the encampment under the pine trees half a mile distant was then visited.

"Returning to the vicinity of the earthworks, where our flag had been hoisted an hour before, a dull explosion was heard, a cloud of smoke went up, and when it passed away there was no vestige of the small frame house upon which our flag had been hoisted. A sailor walking near had fallen into the snare by his foot striking a wire fastened to a peg, through which a 'spur tube' had exploded a quantity of powder placed under the floor of the house. The sailor was knocked down and stunned for a few minutes."

The government loss in the fight was eight killed, and six seriously and seventeen slightly wounded. The Confederates lost "eleven killed, forty-eight wounded and four missing."

Admiral Porter says that "the victory at Port Royal put new life into Union hearts." It "gave the powers of Europe notice that we could and would win back the forts that had been filched from us." It "showed conclusively that the time-honored theory that one gun on

shore was equal to five on shipboard no longer held good." And of Dupont he says that "all the qualities of a great commander were possessed in an eminent degree" by him.

The harbor of Port Royal remained under the flag. The adjoining waters were patrolled by government gunboats, and Tybee Island and other approaches to Savannah soon fell into government hands. Later on Port Royal was used as a base for the operations against Charleston, which will be described further on.

CHAPTER IX

THE *MONITOR* AND THE *MERRIMAC*

SUPERIOR ACTIVITY OF THE CONFEDERATES IN PREPARING FOR IRONCLAD WARFARE AFLOAT—STORY OF THE BUILDING AND ARMING OF THE *MERRIMAC*—SHE WAS A FORMIDABLE SHIP IN SPITE OF DEFECTS IN DETAIL, BUT HER DESIGN WAS NOT THE BEST CONCEIVABLE—ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SHIP THAT REVOLUTIONIZED THE NAVIES OF THE WORLD—A WONDROUS TRIAL TRIP—FOR ONE DAY THE *MERRIMAC* WAS IRRESISTIBLY TRIUMPHANT—TWO FINE SHIPS OF THE OLD STYLE DESTROYED WHILE SHE HERSELF SUFFERED BUT LITTLE—THE MAGNIFICENT FIGHT OF THE *CUMBERLAND*—A DIFFERENCE IN OPINIONS.

THE story of the most famous ship duel known to the history of the world, the battle between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*, begins on June 10, 1861, when Lieut. John M. Brooke, C.S.N., formerly of the American navy, was assigned to assist the Confederate Navy Department in designing an ironclad that should be able to gain control of the navigable waters in and about the Chesapeake Bay. Brooke "entered upon this duty at once, and a few days thereafter submitted to the department, as the results of his investigations, rough drawings of a casemated vessel, with sub-

merged ends and inclined iron-plated sides. The ends of the vessel and the eaves of the casemate, according to his plan, were to be submerged two feet; and a light bulwark or false bow was designed to divide the water and prevent it from banking up on the forward part of the shield with the vessel in motion, and also to serve as a tank to regulate the ship's draft. His design was approved by the department," and Constructor J. L. Porter was brought up from Norfolk to Richmond to assist in making the working drawings. Porter had already been considering this subject, and brought with him a model of a light-draft, screw-driven scow, that was to support a "casemated battery, with inclined iron-covered sides and ends." In the opinion of Brooke this would have been, "for ordinary purposes, a good boat for harbor defence," but a blunt-ended hull was, naturally, not to the liking of a naval man, and he proposed to have the ends of the hull "prolonged and shaped like those of any fast vessel, and submerged two feet under water, so that nothing was to be seen afloat but the shield itself."

Plans were drawn for such a ship, and, with Chief Engineer W. P. Williamson, Brooke went looking for engines to drive the proposed ironclad, but failed to find any. It was

in this emergency that Williamson thought of the hulk of the *Merrimac*, that had been partly burned and sunk at Norfolk. Her engines were old and in bad order when she arrived at Norfolk before the trouble began, and new ones were to have been provided. Moreover, the fire and the soaking in sea-water had injured them; but Williamson knew that they could be made to work. Both Porter and Brooke "thought the draft too great, but were nevertheless of the opinion that it was the best thing that could be done," and the order to transform the old frigate into a floating fort was issued. Williamson "thoroughly overhauled her engines, supplied deficiencies, and repaired defects, and improved greatly the motive power of the vessel." Porter "cut the ship down, submerged her ends, performed all the duties of constructor, and originated all the interior arrangements." The casemate was built according to the plans of his model.

"Mr. Brooke attended daily to the iron armor, constructed targets, ascertained by actual tests the resistance offered by inclined planes of iron to heavy ordnance, and determined interesting and important facts in connection therewith, and which were of great importance in the construction of the ship; devised and prepared the models and drawings of the ship's heavy ordnance, being guns

of a class never before made, and of extraordinary power and strength."

Porter having got the hull in the dry dock, cut it down to where the berth deck had been. Then he laid a heavy timber deck over the entire hull, and on this, amidships, he erected a casemate, with its walls inclined in at an angle of "about thirty-six degrees," according to one of her officers, and forty-five according to another. This casemate was two feet thick, and was made of twelve-inch timbers standing on end, covered with eight-inch timbers laid horizontally, which were in turn covered with oak plank four inches thick. On these were laid iron plates two inches thick and eight inches wide, placed horizontally, with another layer of the same dimensions over them placed vertically. The side-walls of this casemate projected down and out over the sides of the hulk, like the eaves of a country house, to protect the water-line, and the hull itself was plated with one-inch iron for two feet below the deck, although the design called for three-inch iron. The inclined sides were carried up high enough to give seven feet head room inside, and then a heavy flat deck twenty feet wide, with hatches in it, was laid across. On the bow, two feet below the water-line, was bolted a cast-iron wedge that projected two feet from the stem, and was for use as a ram.

The battery of the *Merrimac* contained six of the nine-inch Dahlgrens found in the Norfolk Navy Yard, and four rifles designed by Brooke. Two of these rifles were mounted as pivots at bow and stern, and two smaller ones were in the broadside. The pivots were cast-iron muzzle-loading rifles of seven-inch calibre, and they weighed 14,500 pounds each. The reader will appreciate the weight of the gun when it is told that the best gun in the British navy at that time was the 68-pounder, having a calibre of eight inches and weighing 9,500 pounds. Moreover, Brooke's heavy casting was reinforced by wrought-iron bands shrunk on. The broadside guns were of the same construction, but weighed 9,000 pounds and were of four-inch calibre. Brooke's guns were far and away the best then afloat.

When ready for a trial trip, with all weights on board, the *Merrimac* drew twenty-two feet six inches of water. Her crew numbered 320. She was commanded by Flag Officer Franklin Buchanan, and Lieut. Catesby Ap R. Jones was chief officer. Another lieutenant was John Taylor Wood, and both of these lieutenants have written accounts of the ship. They agree in saying that the engines were in wretched order, and that the great draft of the ship was a serious disadvantage in the waters where she was to be used is manifest.

Nevertheless, for smooth water she was the most powerful ship afloat. She was named the *Virginia*, and should have been called so in history, for she was a rebuilt ship ; but it is too late to change history now.

Of course, the government heard about the building of a floating battery on the *Merrimac* hull. The spy service of the government was never as good as that of the Confederates, and the news obtained was not always appreciated. Porter tells of seeing a mechanic who had fled from the Norfolk Navy Yard ill-treated when taken on board the government flagship to tell what he knew. This matter is referred to, not to make an ill-natured criticism of a government officer, but to show how important it is in time of war to make a full and just estimate of the power of the enemy.

Franklin Buchanan.

The Confederates began the work of converting the *Merrimac* in June, 1861. There

were several frigates in the Union navy that might have been converted, with Northern resources, into more powerful iron-clad batteries than the *Merrimac* was, but nothing was done until Congress met, and on August 3d made an appropriation for ironclads. Then designs were called for, and three were selected for

The *New Ironsides* in Action.

From a photograph, of a drawing, owned by Mr. C. B. Hall.

acceptance after long consideration. One of these proved a failure as an ironclad. One proved a great success a year or so later (she was called the *New Ironsides*), and, fortunately, the third was of a design that might be built quickly and yet prove efficient. This ship was from the brain of John Ericsson, who had already revolutionized the navies of the world

by introducing the submerged screw propeller; and the name which he gave to the marvel he produced, at once became generic.

Although Congress appropriated the money for ironclads on August 3d, the board appointed to consider plans did not convene until the 8th. It took them until September 8th to make up their minds, and it was not until October 4, 1861, that the final contract with Ericsson was signed. This was a needless delay, and this fact is worth emphasizing because it is not unlikely that similar delays will be experienced whenever the nation is again unexpectedly plunged into war.

The Giant and the Dwarfs; or John E. and the Little Mariners.

[From a Swedish caricature, February 10, 1867.]

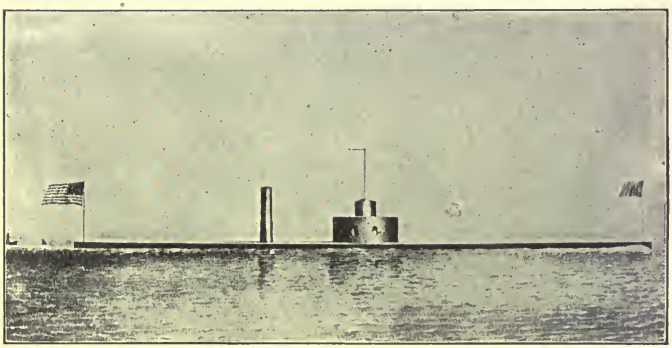
John.—Come here, little boys, and I will show you. What do you say to this model of a gunboat for our coast defence?

The Little Boys.—Won't do . . . too small . . . too heavy draught . . . too large guns . . . too light draught . . . too large . . . too small guns . . . won't do,—that's what I say . . . and I also,—because it isn't our invention.

John.—Well, little boys, that is at least some reason.

But if the authorities were dilatory, the mechanics were not. The keel was stretched in that part of the Brooklyn water front called

Greenpoint, before the end of the month, although working plans had to be laid in the mould loft and contracts for materials made. Three gangs of men were employed, working eight hours each in succession; the iron was kept hot from the day the work began until January 30, 1862, when the hull was sent afloat in the waters of the East River, under the name of *Monitor*.



The Monitor.

The hull of the *Monitor*, as it stood on the land, was in a way something like that of the common ferryboat. There was a smooth, rounded hull, 124 feet long, thirty-four wide, and about six feet deep, with a superstructure laid flat across the top of this hull and projecting out like a guard-rail on all sides.

It projected three feet and eight inches on each side, and twenty-five feet at each end.

But this overhanging part was really a superadded hull; it was a flat-bottomed hull, 172 feet long, forty-one wide, and five feet deep, laid on top of the lower hull, and secured to it by a single row of rivets. As a whole, the *Monitor* was unlike any other hull ever built. And it is no disparagement of the genius of Ericsson to say that no sailorman could ever have dreamed of such a thing even when in a delirium from drink.

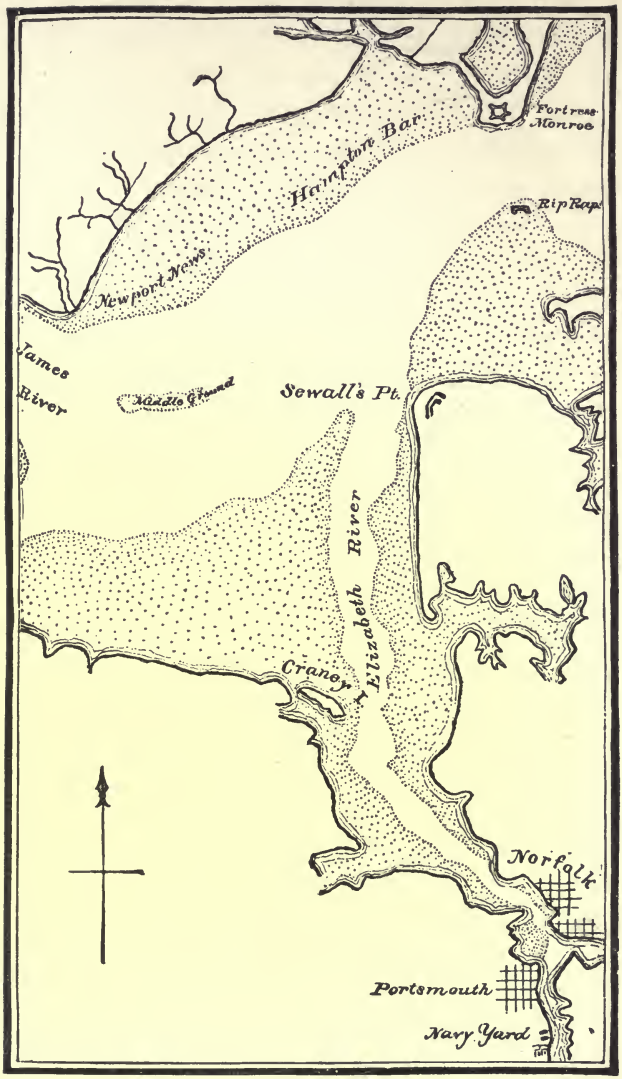
This hull was made of boiler-iron riveted to suitable frames, and the vertical sides of the overhang were protected by five one-inch iron plates bolted on and backed by heavy oak timbers. A heavy timber deck, supported on big wooden beams, was protected from a plunging fire by two layers of half-inch iron plates. On the centre of this hull rose a round turret, twenty feet in diameter inside and nine feet high, made of eight one-inch iron plates. It was supported on a pivot, to which an engine was geared so that it could be readily turned in either direction. Her deck was one foot above the water-line. She carried two eleven-inch smooth-bore guns, firing solid shot weighing from 170 to 180 pounds. Her speed was between four and five knots. A novel feature was the absence of smoke-stacks in action; they were taken apart and laid flat on deck, which gave an all-

round fire abaft. The draught to the furnaces was maintained by powerful blowers. Forward of the turret stood a pilot-house made of iron logs, nine inches square, built up log-cabin fashion by notching and bolting the ends together. Her anchor was suspended in a well under the bow, the cable passing through a pipe beneath the deck to a winch further aft. The propeller was, of course, concealed under the overhang aft. In short, her machinery was altogether below the water-line, while her guns were placed as near the centre of gravity as could well be imagined, and were well protected. It is perhaps as well to say here as elsewhere that with such modifications as experience has suggested, the *Monitor* type is, in the opinion of many of the American captains who have commanded them, not only the best protected, but the most efficient and the safest style of coast-defence ships.

As the month of January, 1862, came on, the Confederates learned from their spies that the *Monitor* was rapidly nearing completion, and the number of men at work on the *Merrimac* was doubled. They had already been pushing the work as fast as daywork could do it, but with the added force, the *Merrimac* rapidly assumed the form where she might be placed in commission. The collecting of a crew proved a matter of some trouble, for the

people of the South were all soldiers rather than seamen; but by visiting the various armies, Captain Buchanan was able to select a thoroughly good crew for the work—men who could fix the boilers, steer the ship, and work the guns to the best advantage. The fact that many of them did not know a royal halliard from a futtock shroud was of no importance, for, like the latest of warships, the *Merrimac* had neither halliards nor shrouds. With the arrival of the crew the eagerness of the officers to try their ship increased. She had never steamed a mile in her new form—she had never steamed at all save only to turn her shaft at the dock to see whether the engines would work or not; but this did not matter. The men were fore and fit, and on Saturday, March 8th, they would show what the ship was good for.

A glance at the map shows that the waters of the James River come down from the northwest, those of the Nansemond come from the southwest, and those of the Elizabeth come up from the south to unite in Hampton Roads, and flow out to the northeast to empty into Chesapeake Bay. Old Point Comfort, with Fortress Monroe, guarded the north side of the mouth of Hampton Roads, but away south, on the route to Norfolk, was Sewell's Point, where the Confederates had erected strong batteries



Hampton Roads.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

that completely commanded the channel running south from Hampton Roads to Norfolk. Over on the northwest corner, so to speak, of Hampton Roads lay Newport News Point, which was held by the government; so the government ships were in the habit of anchoring along the northerly side of Hampton Roads all the way from Fortress Monroe to Newport News, a distance of seven miles. They were in plain sight of the Confederate batteries on Sewell's Point, but far out of range, for it is a wide stretch of water.

On the morning of March 8, 1862, the steam frigates *St. Lawrence*, *Roanoke*, and *Minnesota* were anchored at wide intervals, in the order named, in a line southwest from Fortress Monroe toward Newport News Point, while the sailing frigate *Congress* lay just east of Newport News Point, and the sailing sloop-of-war *Cumberland* lay just a little to the west of the point. It was a lovely day of the early spring. The ships swung easily to their cables; the small boats wabbled over the tiny waves as they tugged at the painters that held them fast to the wide-spread booms. The wash-clothes, on well-filled lines stretched in the rigging, fluttered in the gentle breeze. There was nothing to indicate that any officer had any care or thought of the ironclad ship that for months past the Confederates had

been building at Norfolk. And as a matter of fact they did not give the ironclad a serious thought, for they were conservatives. What could a new-fangled notion like this ironclad do, any way? Hadn't Lord Howard Douglas and other good English authorities proved to the satisfaction of the experienced men of the world that a ship plated with iron would really prove more dangerous to her crew than to an enemy in the oft-approved frigates of the day? He had.

The morning wore away in peace, but at noon exactly, the crew of the *Cumberland* saw the long trail of smoke from steamers that were boldly coming up the channel from Norfolk. A careful lookout kept watch of that smoke until it was seen that the steamers were three in number, of which one, although it made more smoke than both the others, did not look at all like a ship, but like a low black box instead. There was no mistaking her character, however. She looked as the escaped colored people had said the new ironclad looked, and the drums beat the long call to quarters.

Over on the *Congress*, lying east of Newport News Point, there was a similar stir while signal flags fluttered aloft to warn the big steam frigates lying up to the northeast toward Fortress Monroe.

Fortress Monroe and its Vicinity.

1. Old Point Comfort. 2. Fortress Monroe. 3. Water battery. 4. Hampton Roads. 5. Rip Raps. 6. Chesapeake Bay. 7. Sewell's Point. 8. Craney Island 9. Elizabeth River. 10. Norfolk. 11. Portsmouth. 12. Dismal Swamp. 13. Atlantic Ocean. 14. Cape Hatteras, N. C. 15. Nansemond River. 16 James River. 17. Newport News. 18. Hampton. 19. Mill Creek. 20 Land approach to Fortress

Capt. John Marston, who was senior officer and commanded the *Roanoke*, reports that he had already seen the enemy coming. At 12.45 o'clock they passed Sewell's Point, over on the south shore, and on getting out into deep water they headed away to the west toward Newport News.

The *Merrimac* had left Norfolk for a trial trip, but the crew had slushed her walls to make the Yankee shells slip off, and their enthusiasm made them determine to give her such a trial as no new-idea ship ever had either before or since. Running across to Newport News, the *Merrimac* headed for the *Cumberland*, that lay beyond the point. The government crews were at their quarters, and while yet the *Merrimac* was three-quarters of a mile away, the *Cumberland's* ten-inch pivot began to talk. Then the frigate *Congress* opened fire. The *Merrimac* passed her broadside to broadside, for the *Congress* swung head to the east with the young flood-tide. It was an experienced crew on the *Congress*, and her shot rattled and burst against the *Merrimac's* side —rattled and burst "like peas from a peashooter." They made the slush there sizzle and smoke, but they did no damage whatever. As the *Merrimac* passed the *Congress*, however, and opened fire with her broadside, the shot struck home, carrying death on every side.

One broadside only, and then she was gone. She was going to begin on the *Cumberland.* Lieut. George U. Morris was in command of the *Cumberland*, for Capt. William Radford was away on other duty. But Morris was equal to the emergency. As the *Merrimac* drew near, the *Cumberland's* guns were loaded with solid shot and the heaviest service charge of powder. The broadside guns were carefully aimed, and almost every shot struck the moving target—struck it and bounded clear or burst into harmless fragments. There was nothing they could do to impede the coming monster. And then, when the *Merrimac* was within a few yards, her long bow rifle blazed forth. It was aimed by Lieut. Charles Simms, and it killed and wounded "most of the crew of the after pivot gun of the *Cumberland.*"

The *Cumberland* returned the shot with a broadside, but the *Merrimac* was now upon her; the long bow, that was just awash, slid through the water and into the side of the old sloop just under the fore rigging. The crash of the timbers was heard above the roar of the guns. The *Cumberland* shivered and heeled slightly to the blow, while the *Merrimac* hung for a moment in the wound she had made, and then backed off, firing every gun that would bear, while the water went roaring into the

Cumberland through the hole where the ram had struck.

Heading to the west, the *Merrimac* steamed slowly away astern of the wounded ship, and then turned to come back again. While the *Merrimac* turned she raked the *Cumberland* first with the big stern pivot and then with the

The Sinking of the *Cumberland* by the Ironclad *Merrimac.*

From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives.

broadside guns, killing and wounding many, and then ranging up beside her, hailed and demanded that she surrender.

The *Cumberland* was now settling down forward under the weight of water there; it was plain that she must sink. It was certain that her shot could not pierce the side of the ironclad. But Lieutenant Morris replied:

"Never! I'll sink alongside." And then

the *Cumberland's* "gun's crews kicked off their shoes, and stripped to the waist. Tanks of cartridges were hoisted on the gun-deck and opened, and round after round was fired at the ironclad. A shell passing through the hatch burst in the sick-bay, killing four of the wounded. On the berth-deck, the wounded men were lifted upon racks and mess-chests, to keep them from drowning; and as the water rose, those who fell on the upper decks were carried amidships and left there. Already, the boats had been lowered and made fast in a line on the shore side. At half-past hree, the forward magazine was drowned, and five minutes later the order was given to the men to leave quarters and save themselves."

The water had risen at this time to the gun-deck, and the ship was heeling swiftly to port. There was need of haste if the crew were to save themselves even by swimming, but with their feet in the rising flood one crew lingered to fire a last shot. And as its smoke rolled from the ship's side she sank out of sight with her flag flying.

"Never did a crew fight a ship with more spirit and hardihood than these brave fellows of the *Cumberland* while the vessel was going down. Nor was it a mere idle display of gallantry, this holding on to the last; for in these days, in naval battles," "*c'est le dernier coup*

qui peut-être nous rendra victorieux" (the last shot may give us the victory). "*Tirez, tirez toujours!*"

Flag and all disappeared as the ship went down, but the water was only fifty-four feet deep, and when she struck bottom she righted, and the peaks of her masts appeared once more to flutter the old flag in the sunlight.

And let it be told to the honor of the *Cumberland's* crew, who fought till their feet were wet by the water above the deck of the sinking ship, that their shot did more damage than any others fired at the *Merrimac*, not excepting the *Monitor's;* for they shot off the muzzles of two of the Confederate guns and burst a shell in a port where its fragments killed two and wounded several others.

There were 376 souls on board the *Cumberland* when she went into action. Of these, 117 were lost and twenty-three were missing.

"The gallantry of her officers and crew was the theme of great praise, and painting and poetry celebrated their heroism. Lieutenant Morris, who was commanding in the absence of Captain Radford, was the recipient of special commendations from the Secretary of the Navy in a letter to him on the 21st March. Just a week later, twelve citizens of Philadelphia, all personal strangers to him, presented to Lieutenant Morris, at the house of R. W.

The *Merrimac* Ramming the *Cumberland.*

From a drawing by M. J. Burns.

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Leaming, an elegant sword, saying in a letter to him, that it could have 'no worthier recipient than the brave sailor who fought his ship while a plank floated, fired his last broadside in sinking, and went down with his flag flying at the peak.' On the sword was the motto in Latin, 'I sink, but never surrender.'"

George U. Morris.
From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall.

From the *Cumberland* the *Merrimac* turned to the government batteries on shore, which were silenced for brief intervals, and then she began on the *Congress*. Lieut. Joseph B. Smith was in command that day. Seeing the fate of the *Cumberland*, he made sail to fly toward Fortress Monroe, but unfortunately grounded. Two Confederate gunboats that had come with the *Merrimac* got under the stern of the *Congress* and opened a hot fire where only two guns would bear on them, and then finally came the *Merrimac* to take a raking position at a distance of 150

yards. She could not use the ram because the water was shoal, but her powerful battery knocked the guns of the *Congress* to pieces and "searched the ship." Just before the last stern gun was disabled the powder cartridges ceased coming to it. The division lieutenant went to learn why. "After my eyes became a little accustomed to the darkness and the sharp smoke from burning oak," he wrote, "I saw that the line of cooks and wardroom servants stationed to pass full boxes had been raked by a shell, and every one of them either killed or wounded." For an hour the crew of the *Congress* stood to their guns, and then, Lieutenant Smith having been killed, and the ship being on fire in several places, Lieut. Austin Pendergrast hoisted a white flag.

Meantime the flagship *Roanoke* had sent the *Minnesota* over toward Newport News to attack the *Merrimac*, and had herself followed with the *St. Lawrence.* But only the *Minnesota* got near enough to fight. The other two "very prudently ran aground not far from Fortress Monroe."

"As soon as the *Congress* surrendered, Commander Buchanan ordered the gun-boats *Beaufort* and *Raleigh* to steam alongside, take off her crew, and set fire to the ship. Lieutenant Pendergrast surrendered to Lieutenant Parker, of the *Beaufort.* Delivering his sword and

colors, he was directed by Lieutenant Parker to return to his ship and have the wounded transferred as rapidly as possible. All this time the shore batteries and small-arm men were keeping up an incessant fire on our vessels. Two of the officers of the *Raleigh*, Lieutenant Taylor and Midshipman Hutter, were killed while assisting the Union wounded out of the *Congress*. A number of the enemy's men were killed by the same fire. Finally it became so hot that the gun-boats were obliged to haul off with only thirty prisoners, leaving Lieutenant Pendergrast and most of his crew on board, and they all afterward escaped on shore by swimming or in small boats. While this was going on, the white flag was flying at her mainmast-head. Not being able to take possession of his prize, the commodore ordered hot shot to be used, and in a short time she was in flames fore and aft. While directing this, both himself and his flag-lieutenant, Minor, were severely wounded. The command then devolved upon Lieut. Catesby Jones.

"Our loss in killed and wounded was twenty-one. The armor was hardly damaged, though at one time our ship was the focus on which were directed at least one hundred heavy guns afloat and ashore. But nothing outside escaped. Two guns were disabled by having their muzzles shot off. The ram was left in

the side of the *Cumberland.* One anchor, the smoke-stack, and the steam-pipes were shot away. Railings, stanchions, boat-davits, everything was swept clean. The flag-staff was repeatedly knocked over, and finally a boarding-pike was used. Commodore Buchanan and the other wounded were sent to the Naval Hospital, and after making preparations for the next day's fight, we slept at our guns, dreaming of other victories in the morning."

The quotations above are from John Taylor Wood's story of the action, as printed in the *Century Magazine*, and Wood was a lieutenant on the *Merrimac.* There is no dispute as to the facts which he there relates. The points especially worth observing in this account are these: The government batteries on shore continued their fire at the Confederates after the *Congress* showed the white flag, and this fire killed friend and foe alike. The commanding officer of the *Congress* "was *directed* by Lieutenant Parker to return to his ship and have the wounded transferred," and the Confederate "gunboats were obliged to haul off with only thirty prisoners, leaving Lieutenant Pendergrast" on the *Congress.* Captain Buchanan's report of the fight says that the firing on the Confederate gunboats was "vile treachery"; and Scharf's history says that "very great indignation was felt and expressed by the Con-

federates," because the officers of the *Congress* who had surrendered did not hasten on board the last Confederate gunboat leaving the side of the surrendered ship. It says their remaining on the *Congress* was "to the discredit of the honor of American sailors." Admiral Porter says, regarding Buchanan's firing red-hot shot at the *Congress* when the white flag was flying and many wounded as well as the unhurt were on board, "this was certainly most inhuman, since the crew of the *Congress* were not responsible for the act of the troops on shore."

It was a right fierce battle, and the things done were inevitable under the circumstances —inevitable because of the passions excited by actual conflict. If another battle of the kind be conceivable, then just such doings must follow in its wake.

In after years Secretary of the Navy Welles wrote an account of the effect this first raid of the *Merrimac* had upon a Cabinet meeting at Washington. Because it showed a lamentable ignorance of the real power of the ship, and because the losses of the day were wholly due to needless delays in preparing to meet the new style of warship, it is worth while quoting one paragraph from his article :

"'The *Merrimac*,' said Stanton, 'will change the whole character of the war; she will destroy,

seriatim, every naval vessel; she will lay all the cities on the seaboard under contribution. I shall immediately recall Burnside; Port Royal must be abandoned. I will notify the governors and municipal authorities in the North to take instant measures to protect their harbors.' He had no doubt, he said, that the monster was at this moment on her way to Washington; and, looking out of the window, which commanded a view of the Potomac for many miles, 'Not unlikely, we shall have a shell or cannon-ball from one of her guns in the White House before we leave this room.' Mr. Seward, usually buoyant and self-reliant, overwhelmed with the intelligence, listened in responsive sympathy to Stanton, and was greatly depressed, as, indeed, were all the members."

But that was not all nor the worst of the panic. Assistant Secretary of War John Tucker wrote to Commodore Vanderbilt of New York to ask "for what sum you will contract to destroy the *Merrimac* . . . answer by telegraph, as there is no time to be lost." Humiliating as such panics are, they must not be forgotten; they must be remembered because they are humiliating, in order that they may be avoided in future.

By the time the *Congress* was ablaze beyond remedy, five o'clock had come, and the ebb-tide had run so far that the *Merrimac*

could not go to look after the *Minnesota*, which was grounded some distance off toward Fortress Monroe. Moreover, another day was coming, and to the mind of Lieutenant Jones, who now commanded, he would much better return to Sewell's Point for the night and take the others on the first of the flood-tide next day. That he would have destroyed them at leisure next day, had no new element come into the conflict, is now unquestioned. But a new and a remarkable element—the *Monitor*—was at hand.

CHAPTER X

FIRST BATTLE BETWEEN IRONCLADS

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE *MONITOR* AND THE *MERRIMAC* BY THE ENGLISH STANDARD OF 1812—IT ASTONISHED THE SPECTATORS TO SEE THE TINY *MONITOR'S* TEMERITY—AFTER HALF A DAY'S FIRING IT WAS PLAIN THAT THE GUNS COULD NOT PENETRATE THE ARMOR—ATTEMPTS TO RAM THAT FAILED—THE *MERRIMAC* A-LEAK—CAPTAIN WORDEN OF THE *MONITOR* DISABLED WHEN THE *MERRIMAC'S* FIRE WAS CONCENTRATED ON THE PILOT-HOUSE—WHERE THE *MONITOR'S* GUNNERS FAILED—FAIR STATEMENT OF THE RESULT OF THE BATTLE—WORDEN'S FAITHFUL CREW—THE *MERRIMAC* DEFIED THE *MONITOR* IN MAY, BUT WHEN NORFOLK WAS EVACUATED SHE HAD TO BE ABANDONED AND WAS BURNED AT CRANEY ISLAND—LOSS OF THE *MONITOR*.

As it happened, the gunners on the *Merrimac*, when firing red-hot shot at the *Congress*, aimed high, and the shot were lodged in the upper part of the hull. The flames quickly spread over the bulwarks and up the rigging, but were slow in eating down toward the magazine. For hours the flames illuminated the whole region, while now and again a gun that had been left loaded was fired by the growing heat. It was a scene that attracted thousands of eyes ashore and afloat until, soon

after midnight, the fire arrived at the magazine, and the exploding powder hurled the huge mass of blazing timbers high in air. A thunderous roar shook all the region round about, and then "the stillness of death" followed.

But while the men on the *Merrimac* watched the fruition of their day's work, one of them, a pilot, saw "a strange-looking craft brought out in bold relief by the brilliant light of the burning ship, which he at once proclaimed to be the *Ericsson.*" The pilot was right. The *Monitor* had arrived after a fearsome passage, during which the water had poured in through the hawse-pipe where the anchor chain led, and even down the smoke-stack, until the fires were all but extinguished. The belts on the fans got wet, so that it was not possible to keep up the draft, and the engineers and firemen were all but suffocated. The water dashed through the lookout slats of the pilot-house with such force as to knock the pilot over the wheel. The water gained in the hold until there was imminent danger of sinking. Nevertheless, it was an offshore wind, and the tug that went with her got her inshore, where the water was quiet, and at 4 o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, March 8th, she passed in at Cape Henry and headed north for Hampton Roads. She was commanded by Capt. J. L. Worden, with Lieut. S. D. Greene as

executive officer, and A. C. Stivers and Isaac Newton as chief and first assistant engineers. The roar of the guns of the *Merrimac* as she fired hot shot into the *Congress* twenty miles away, fell upon the ears of the *Monitor's* crew, and the ship was at once cleared for action. After a little they "could see the fine old *Congress* burning brightly, and soon a pilot came on board to tell the direful news." The *Monitor* was then driven at full speed to the *Roanoke*, where Flag Officer Marston directed her to go to the assistance of the *Minnesota*, then aground not far from the scene of the day's conflict. In doing this Marston disobeyed orders he had received from Washington to the effect that the *Monitor* was to be sent there, presumably to protect the capital; and this is to be remembered because it shows that the authorities at Washington were as loath to trust in aggressive warfare in 1862 as they were in 1812 when they ordered Hull to keep the *Constitution* in Boston harbor.

J. L. Worden.

From a photograph.

Steaming over to where the *Minnesota* lay, the *Monitor* came to anchor, an officer reported on board the big frigate, "and then all on board [the *Minnesota*] felt that we had a friend that would stand by us in our hour of trial." So wrote Captain Van Brunt of the *Minnesota.*

How far this confidence was justified was proved by the event of the next day; but when one contrasts the apparent power of the two ships as they lay that night, the one at Sewell's Point and the other at Newport News, the chance of the *Monitor's* accomplishing anything seems very remote. Consider her guns. They were eleven inches in bore, but ten-inch shot had been fired at the *Merrimac* for hours that day without effect. The *Minnesota* fired seventy-eight solid ten-inch shot and 169 solid nine-inch shot, with full service charges of powder, at the *Merrimac* during the two days' fighting. Only a few of these were fired on Saturday, but the *Congress* and the *Cumberland* had fired shot a-plenty of that size at her, and none had hurt her massive walls. The eleven-inch shot of the *Monitor* was not so much heavier that her crew could be confident of piercing the armor where the ten-inch had failed utterly. The eleven-inch solid shot used weighed from 170 to 180 pounds, the ten-inch about forty pounds less.

Moreover, the *Monitor* had but two guns to the ten of the *Merrimac.* The weight of the *Merrimac's* broadside of five guns is not given in any of the authorities known to the writer, but her three Dahlgrens fired 270 pounds, her small rifle at least forty-five more, and, with one pivot counted in, the whole discharge was 465 pounds, or more than double that of the *Monitor.* The *Monitor's* crew numbered fifty-eight, all told, while the *Merrimac* carried 320. Certainly if one may judge by the standards set up in English literature on the War of 1812, these differences in numbers of crews and weights of broadsides would make the result a foregone conclusion. Nor is that all to be said about the crews, for the men on the *Merrimac* had had their usual rest and food, while the crew of the *Monitor* had had scarcely a wink of sleep since leaving New York, and it had been impossible to make a fire in the galley and cook their food. They were served with food that night, but no one slept. "The dreary night dragged slowly on; the officers and crew were up and alert, to be ready for any emergency." At daylight the Confederate ships were seen at anchor off Sewell's Point, and at 7.30 o'clock they left their anchorage and headed across toward Newport News to begin anew their destruction of the Government ships.

"At the same time the *Monitor* got under way, and her officers and crew took their stations for battle," Captain Worden going into the pilot-house with Quartermaster Peter Williams, who was to handle the wheel, and Pilot Howard to tell the route. These three filled

Deck View of the *Monitor* and her Crew.

From a photograph.

the little coop, that rose just four feet above the deck. Lieutenant Greene went to the turret with "sixteen brawny men, eight to each gun." Engineer Stivers also entered the turret to assist in handling the machinery turning it, and Acting Master L. N. Stodder was there as second in command. Newton

had charge of the engines. The most important man in the ship that day was Greene, for it was his duty to aim and fire the guns.

Something like an hour passed, after the *Merrimac* left her anchorage, before she arrived in range of the government ships, but when yet a mile away she opened with her big bow rifle on the *Minnesota*. The *Monitor* had waited for her, and now, as the first shot was fired, headed straight at her. It astonished the hosts of spectators to see the tiny steamer taken directly alongside her huge antagonist. As she ranged up in place, her engine was stopped, and Worden, stooping over a speaking-tube that led to the turret, shouted the order:

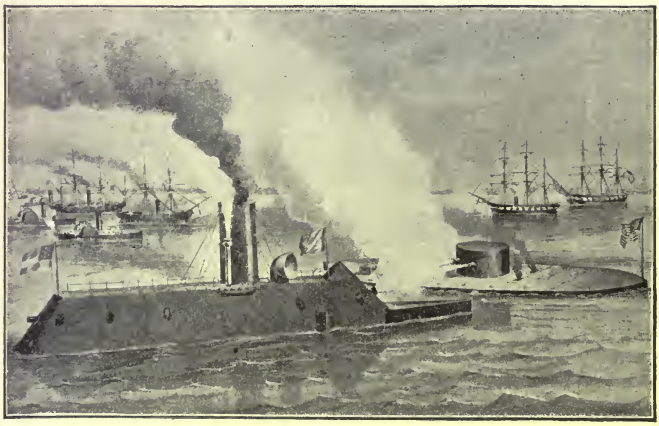
"Commence firing!"

The crew in the turret triced up the shutter that covered the port, ran the gun out as far as it would go, and then Lieutenant Greene, taking deliberate aim at the broad but sloping wall, pulled the lock-string. The shot struck its target with a resounding crash, split and broke the iron plates in its path and bounded clear. The *Merrimac* replied with a broadside, and every shot struck the revolving turret, but all without exception bounded away harmless. "A look of confidence passed over the men's faces in the turret," and with good will they fell to the work of reloading

the gun, while Greene ran out the other one and fired as before.

The most important naval battle in the history of the world was fairly on. "Never before was anything like it dreamed of by the greatest enthusiast in maritime war."

With deliberation the crews on both sides



The Fight between the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor*.

From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives.

worked their guns. The *Monitor* fired a gun in seven or eight minutes, and the *Merrimac* for a time made an average of a gun once in less than three minutes. But the *Monitor*, having a revolving turret, could easily direct her guns at the *Merrimac*, while the latter, huge and unwieldy and with narrow ports, had to trust to the fortunes of the battle for

a chance to get a good aim at her tiny opponent.

Standing in the little pilot-house, Captain Worden peered through the chinks left for eye-holes between the iron logs of which it was built. He saw that the shot first fired against the broad wall of the *Merrimac* bounded away without doing material harm, so he lessened the range—laid the *Monitor* so close beside her that an active man might have leaped from ship to ship. Still the *Monitor's* shot failed to penetrate, and he then went cruising to and fro, seeking a vulnerable point, but finding none, although a single well-directed shot would have sunk the *Merrimac* out of sight. Failing in this, Worden made a dash at the stern of the *Merrimac*, hoping to disable her rudder or screw. He missed the mark, it is said, by the narrow margin of two feet. Then the speaking-tube leading to the turret broke, and the purser and the surgeon were stationed to pass the orders of the captain. The interior of the turret became filled with smoke, and the walls and deck were covered with the grime of battle. A painted mark which had been laid to enable the turret's crew to tell which side was starboard and which port, was obliterated. The turret's crew were shut in and unable to learn, save with great difficulty, the bearing of the enemy. The ma-

chinery that turned the turret was not quite equal to the work; "it was hard to start and harder to stop when once agoing." Greene was obliged to fire from a moving turret, and the intervals between shots were lengthened.

In the *Monitor's* Turret.

But over on the *Merrimac* matters were in quite as bad a condition. The "ship was working worse and worse. The smoke-stack was carried away, and the steam went down. Twice she grounded, while the *Monitor*, having but a little more than half her draft, played

around her." And even the shot from the big rifles made no impression on the turret of the *Monitor*. Lieutenant Jones, on going to one part of the gundeck, found the men standing idle.

"'Why are you not firing?' he said to the lieutenant in charge.

"'Why, our powder is very precious,' replied the lieutenant, 'and after two hours I find that I can do her about as much damage by snapping my thumb at her every two and a half minutes.'" So says Wood, already quoted.

At this, Jones determined to ram the *Monitor*, and for an hour manœuvred for a position before he was able to order, "Go ahead full speed!" Even then he failed because the watchful Worden gave the handy little *Monitor* a turn, and the *Merrimac* struck a glancing blow that did not hurt the *Monitor*, but it opened up her own bow, making an "alarming leak." The leak was temporarily plugged, but it had its effect on the fortunes of the day, later on.

As the *Merrimac* sheered past the *Monitor* when trying to ram her, the *Monitor* fired while the ships' sides were touching. The shot struck at right angles, and not only broke the armor-plates, but bulged in the wood backing from two to three inches. The concussion made the men in the immediate

vicinity bleed at the nose and ears. It happened on the *Monitor* that a shot which struck the turret about that time disabled Mr. Stodder, but he was thoughtlessly leaning against the turret wall. These were the most effective shots fired on either side during about six hours of steady fighting. The crew of the *Merrimac* were ordered to board the *Monitor* at this time, but the ships drifted apart before it could be tried.

Meantime the *Merrimac* had been making occasional efforts to get at the vulnerable *Minnesota*. She had fired not a few shots at her from the off-side battery. One shot exploded the boiler of the tug *Dragon* alongside, and others made havoc on board the big ship. The *Minnesota* replied as well as her situation permitted, but without effect.

And then the end came when the commander of the *Merrimac* so far appreciated the condition of affairs as to order his gunners to concentrate their fire on the *Monitor's* pilothouse. The result was paralyzing. A shell fired at a range of ten yards struck and burst against a lookout slot through which Captain Worden was gazing. Flaming grains of powder and shreds of iron were driven into his face and eyes. It knocked him across the pilothouse, and blinded and wholly disabled him.

The force of the explosion lifted a loose

plate that lay on top of the pilot-house, and let in a flood of light. This "caused Worden, blind as he was, to believe that the pilot-house was seriously injured, if not destroyed; he therefore gave orders to put the helm to starboard and sheer off." "The *Monitor* retired temporarily from the action in order to ascertain the extent of the injuries she had received." Worden was helped down from the pilot-house, and Greene was sent for. He found Worden, "a ghastly sight, with his eyes closed and the blood apparently pouring from every pore in the upper part of his face." Greene helped him to a sofa, where the doctor took charge of him. He believed himself dangerously hurt, but did not lose his fortitude. Greene then went to the pilot-house and took command.

During the time that was needed by this change of commanders the *Monitor* was heading toward Fortress Monroe. Captain Van Brunt "thought it probable she had exhausted her supply of ammunition, or sustained some injury." Lieutenant Jones and his officers on the *Merrimac* very naturally supposed that the *Monitor* had given up the contest. Jones says:

"We for some time awaited the return of the *Monitor* to the Roads. After consultation it was decided that we should proceed to the

The Action between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac.*

From an engraving of the picture by Chappel.

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navy-yard in order that the vessel should be brought down in the water and completed. The pilots said if we did not then leave that we could not pass the bar until noon of the next day. We therefore at 12 M. quit the Roads and stood for Norfolk. Had there been any sign of the *Monitor's* willingness to renew the contest we would have remained to fight her."

Lieutenant Greene, of the *Monitor*, says of this matter:

"Exactly how much time elapsed from the moment that Worden was wounded until I had reached the pilot-house and completed the examination of the injury at that point, and determined what course to pursue in the damaged condition of the vessel, it is impossible to state; but it could hardly have exceeded twenty minutes at the utmost. During this time the *Merrimac*, which was leaking badly, had started in the direction of the Elizabeth River; and, on taking my station in the pilot-house and turning the vessel's head in the direction of the *Merrimac*, I saw that she was already in retreat. A few shots were fired at the retiring vessel, and she continued on to Norfolk. I returned with the *Monitor* to the side of the *Minnesota*, where preparations were being made to abandon the ship, which was still aground. Shortly afterward Worden was

transferred to a tug, and that night he was carried to Washington."

Undoubtedly fair is the statement made by Lieut. John Taylor Wood:

"Although there is no doubt that the *Monitor* first retired,—for Captain Van Brunt, commanding the *Minnesota*, so states in his official report,—*the battle was a drawn one*, so far as the two vessels engaged were concerned. But *in its general results the advantage was with the Monitor.*"

The italics are not in Lieutenant Wood's statement, but are inserted here to emphasize the effect of what he says. Greene adds:

"It has never been denied that the object of the *Merrimac* on the 9th of March was to complete the destruction of the Union fleet in Hampton Roads, and that in this she was completely foiled and driven off by the *Monitor;* nor has it been denied that at the close of the engagement the *Merrimac* retreated to Norfolk, leaving the *Monitor* in possession of the field."

The reader is likely to think that "retreat" is a strong word to use under the circumstances, especially as the ebb-tide and not the *Monitor* made the *Merrimac* leave. Nevertheless, there was also the leak in the *Merrimac's* bow to be considered. That leak was "alarming," according to Jones, and the *Mer-*

rimac got it in battle by ramming the *Monitor*.

But while the controversy over the result of the battle is interesting, it is in no sense practical. It is certain that neither crew was whipped, whatever happened to the ships. The bravery on both sides must excite the pride of every American. But the one point of the battle that is of practical consideration is the gunnery.

Says Lieutenant Wood: "The *Monitor* was well handled, and saved the *Minnesota* and the remainder of the fleet at Fortress Monroe. But her gunnery was poor. Not a single shot struck us at the water-line, where the ship was utterly unprotected, and where one would have been fatal. Or had the fire been concentrated on any one spot, the shield would have been pierced; or had larger charges been used, the result would have been the same." Here are statements of fact that ought never to be forgotten. The haymakers of the lost *Wasp* came back from the mists in which they disappeared to mock at the gunnery displayed in the Civil War, and especially in this battle, for they, in a battle at night, laid their guns by the sissing line of foam cast off by the *Avon's* bow, and so struck the water-line and sank the ship in spite of the utmost efforts of three crews to save her.

In her battle with the *Monitor* the *Merrimac* was floating with her unarmed bow, seventy feet long, more than a foot out of water, instead of a-wash, as was originally intended. Had one shot from the *Monitor* struck the

Group of Officers on Deck of the *Monitor*.

From a photograph.

Merrimac at the water-line's junction with the armor, she would have gone down. And yet Greene elevated instead of depressing his guns. The gunnery of the *Merrimac* was better than that of the *Monitor*, for it was concentrated at the last on a vulnerable point—the

pilot-house—and so Worden was disabled (he was the only one badly hurt in this fight), and the *Monitor*, for the time, was driven away. The battle between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* did not result in a glorious victory, but it was an unparalleled lesson in naval warfare.

As a part of the history of the two famous ironclads, and as a portrayal of the heart of the typical naval seaman of that day, the following letter, written to Captain Worden while he was under the surgeon's care in Washington, must be given :

"To Captain Worden.
"Hampton Roads, *April* 24th, 1862.
"U. S. *Monitor.*

"*To our Dear and Honored Captain.*

"Dear Sir : These few lines is from your own crew of the *Monitor*, with their kindest Love to you their Honored Captain, hoping to God that they will have the pleasure of welcoming you back to us again soon, for we are all ready able and willing to meet Death or anything else, only give us back our Captain again. Dear Captain we have got your Pilot-house fixed and all ready for you when you get well again ; and we all sincerely hope that soon we will have the pleasure of welcoming you back to it. . . . We are waiting very patiently to engage our Antagonist if we could only get a chance to do so. The last time she came out we all thought we

would have the Pleasure of sinking her. But we all got disappointed for we did not fire one shot and the Norfolk papers says we are cowards in the *Monitor*—and all we want is a chance to show them where it lies with you for our Captain We can teach them who is cowards. But there is a great deal that we would like to write to you but we think you will soon be with us again yourself. But we all join in with our kindest love to you, hoping that God will restore you to us again and hoping that your sufferings is at an end now, and we are all so glad to hear that your eyesight will be spaired to you again. We would wish to write more to you if we have your kind Permission to do so but at present we all conclude by tendering to you our kindest Love and affection, to our Dear and Honored Captain.

"We remain untill Death your Affectionate Crew

"THE MONITOR BOYS."

The stories of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* may soon be completed. The *Merrimac* was overhauled at Norfolk. Commodore Josiah Tattnall relieved Admiral Buchanan in command. On the 11th of April he took the *Virginia* (*Merrimac*) down to Hampton Roads, expecting to have a desperate encounter with the *Monitor*. "Greatly to our surprise, the *Monitor* refused to fight us. She closely hugged the shore under the guns of

the fort, with her steam up. Hoping to provoke her to come out, the *Jamestown* was sent in, and captured several prizes, but the *Monitor* would not budge." That is from a Confederate account, and it is truthful. The *Monitor* was under strict orders from Washington not to engage the *Merrimac* unless forced to do so. A great fleet, that included a number of vessels which were supposed to be able to sink the *Merrimac* by ramming, had gathered at Hampton Roads. Commodore Goldsborough was in command of the fleet. The prizes mentioned, two brigs and a schooner, were taken from Newport News and in plain sight of the fleet. Professor Soley's history says very truly that this incident was "humiliating." For about a month after that nothing was done, but "on the 8th of May a squadron, including the *Monitor*, bombarded our batteries at Sewell's Point. We immediately left the yard for the Roads. As we drew near, the *Monitor* and her consorts ceased bombarding, and retreated under the guns of the forts, keeping beyond the range of our guns. Men-of-war from below the forts, and vessels expressly fitted for running us down, joined the other vessels between the forts. It looked as if the fleet was about to make a fierce onslaught upon us. But we were again to be disappointed. The *Monitor* and the other

vessels did not venture to meet us, although we advanced until projectiles from the Rip Raps fell more than half a mile beyond us. Our object, however, was accomplished; we had put an end to the bombardment, and we returned to our buoy."

As the reader observes, this is also a Confederate account. Commodore Goldsborough's report says, on the contrary, that "the *Merrimac* was more cautious than ever"; and that the "*Monitor* was kept well in advance so that the *Merrimac* could have engaged her without difficulty had she been so disposed." But the unprejudiced reader will say that a Farragut was needed at the head of the Union force.

The *Merrimac* remained unmolested until government operations ashore compelled the Confederates to evacuate Norfolk and the battery at Sewell's Point. Tattnall wished to retreat with the *Merrimac* up the James River, but his pilots said it could not be done, and accordingly, on the night of May 10, 1862, he ran her ashore "in the bight of Craney Island," not far from where he had, as a midshipman in his teens, led the sortie from the little fort built there to keep the British from Norfolk—led the sortie that drove the boastful Pechell's men helter-skelter back to their ships. On Craney Island he fired the *Merrimac* and

retreated ashore, leaving her to blow up on the morning of the 11th at 5 o'clock.

The *Monitor* lasted a few months longer. She was ordered to Beaufort, North Carolina, in tow of the *Rhode Island*, and sailed from Hampton Roads on the afternoon of December 29, 1862. The *Passaic*, in tow of the *State*

Destruction of the *Merrimac* off Craney Island.

From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives.

of Georgia, went along. On the morning of January 2d a long swell set in with a wind that grew to a gale, and just before midnight she foundered, although not until all but sixteen of her crew were saved.

If the reader would know the effect of this fight on the navies of the world, let him compare the best ships afloat in 1860—the old-

style ships with lofty masts and swelling canvas—with the latest designs of battle-ships. For the old frigates all disappeared, one may say, when the *Cumberland* went, and the turreted floating fort has followed in the wake of the *Monitor*.

CHAPTER XI

WITH THE MISSISSIPPI GUNBOATS

CREATING A FLEET FOR THE OPENING OF THE WATER ROUTE ACROSS THE CONFEDERACY—IRONCLADS THAT WERE NOT SHOT-PROOF, BUT FAIRLY EFFICIENT NEVERTHELESS—GUNS THAT BURST AND BOILERS THAT WERE SEARCHED BY SHOT FROM THE ENEMY—WHEN GRANT RETREATED AND WAS COVERED BY A GUNBOAT—FIRST VIEW OF TORPEDOES—CAPTURE OF FORT HENRY—A DISASTROUS ATTACK ON FORT DONELSON—WHEN WALKE BRAVED THE BATTERIES AT ISLAND NO. 10—THE CONFEDERATE DEFENCE SQUADRON AT FORT PILLOW—THE FIRST BATTLE OF STEAM RAMS—FRIGHTFUL EFFECTS OF BURSTED BOILERS—IN THE WHITE RIVER—FARRAGUT APPEARS.

In all the naval operations of the Civil War hitherto described in this history, the object had in view by the government was to strangle and starve the Confederates. The blockade and the occupation of points on the Confederate coasts had but one object, and even the capture of the Confederate agents on the *Trent* was intended as a part of the same work. The battle between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* was fought on one side to raise and on the other to maintain the blockade at Hampton Roads. The *Merrimac* was not seaworthy and could not have been made so.

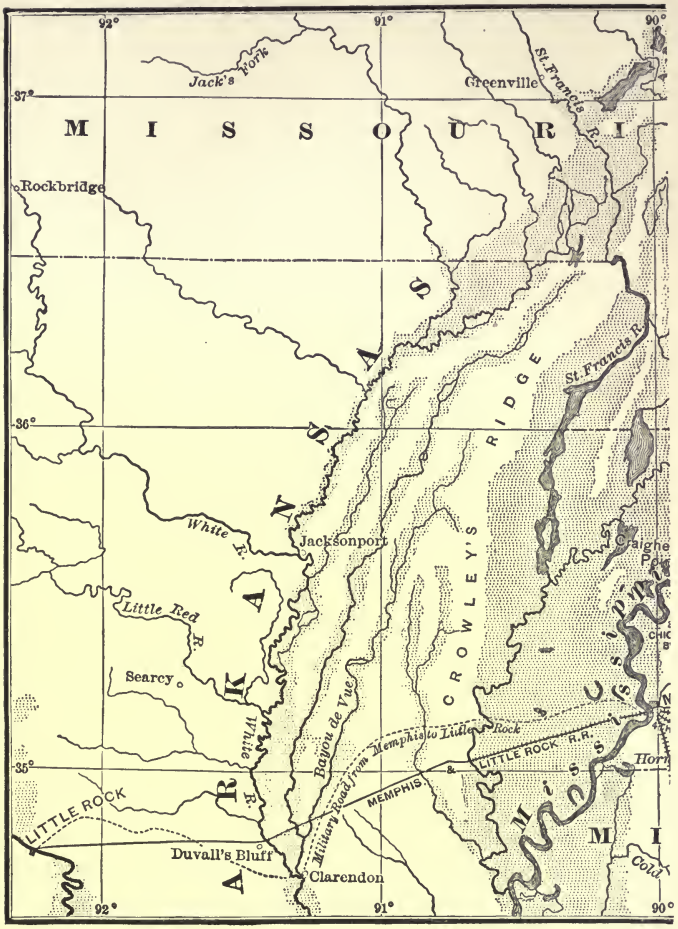
The Confederates had no thought of using her beyond the waters of the Chesapeake. But while the naval forces were carrying on this alongshore work with practically uninterrupted success, an aggressive movement that was to have far-reaching consequences was planned and in time carried out by the naval power. This was the opening of the Mississippi.

In the early days of the war the Confederates having erected a number of forts along the principal streams of the lower Mississippi watershed, the government army officers were of the opinion that no armed vessels would be of any use there. They thought, curiously enough, that the forts must effectually close navigation on the streams.

However, this hopeless view vanished as the importance of the navigation of those streams grew upon the minds of all interested in the conflict in that region. One has now but to glance at the map of the Mississippi Valley to understand the situation as it was then. For the Mississippi itself, below Cairo, wound its way through a course more than 1,000 miles of what was practically Confederate territory. And, then, there were the Cumberland and the Tennessee Rivers, that were navigable almost into the heart of the Confederate States, while other streams like the Red, further south, were to be considered. In

these streams were found the cheapest and most comfortable highways for the conveyance of armed forces; but more important still was the fact that if the government controlled the Mississippi, it cut the Confederacy into two parts and shut off the supplies grown in the western part from the hungry East. An inland navy was an imperative necessity, and the War Department undertook the task of providing one.

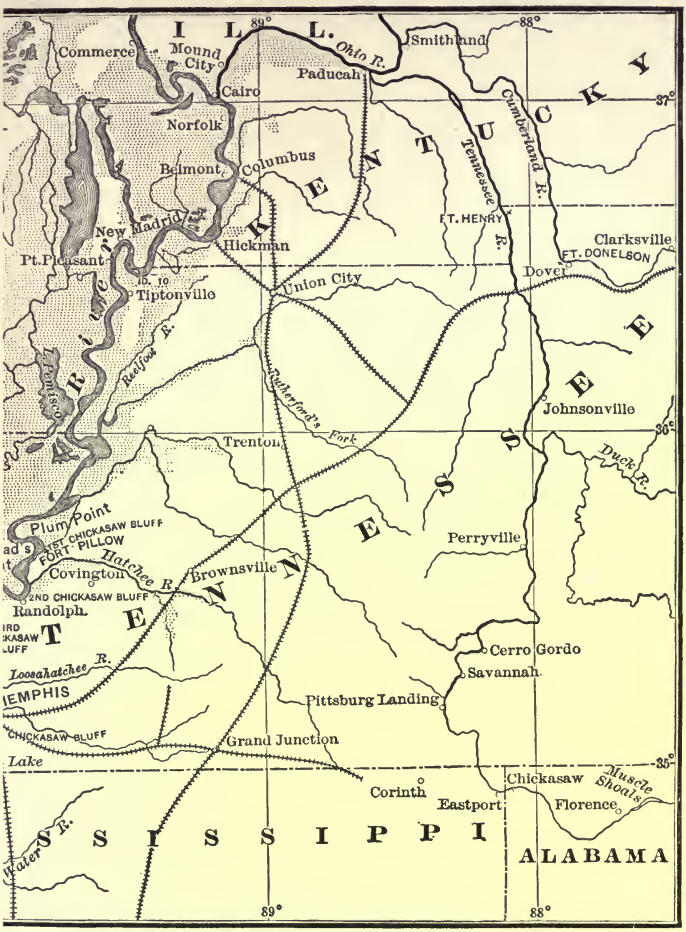
Commander John Rodgers was ordered to report for duty to Gen. John C. Fremont, who was then in command in the Mississippi Valley, in order that he might attend to this work. His first move, like the work of the Navy Department in establishing the blockade, was to buy and arm some merchant vessels. Three that were named *Taylor*, *Lexington*, and *Conestoga* were obtained at Cincinnati, and converted into warships by shifting the boilers and steam-pipes into the hold and building five-inch oak bulwarks around the decks to protect the crews from musket-shots. These bulwarks were pierced with portholes, and old guns were mounted in them, navy fashion. The *Taylor* had seven, and the others five and three respectively, nearly all the guns being medium-length sixty-four-pounder shell guns. They had no iron armor of any kind.



Mississippi Valley—

From "The Navy

In those days James B. Eads, afterwards famous as an engineer, was a river-boat builder, having his yard at Carondelet, Missouri.

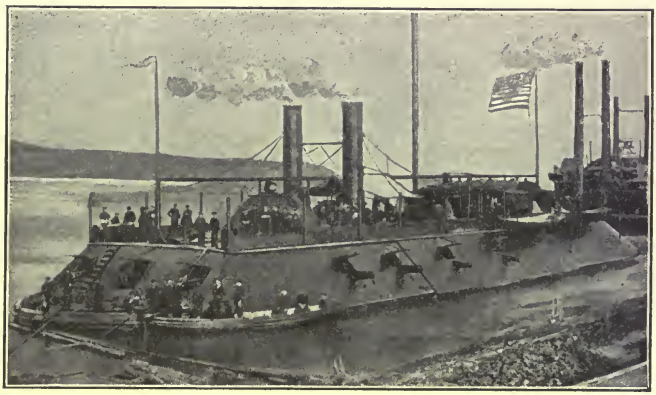


Cairo to Memphis.

in the Civil War."

When in July, 1861, the quartermaster-general of the army advertised for bids for the construction of seven ironclad gunboats for

service in the Mississippi Valley, Eads submitted plans, with estimates of cost and time, that were at once accepted by the government. The contracts were signed on August 7th, and it was agreed that the seven should be ready for crews and guns in sixty-five days, although the birds were teaching their young



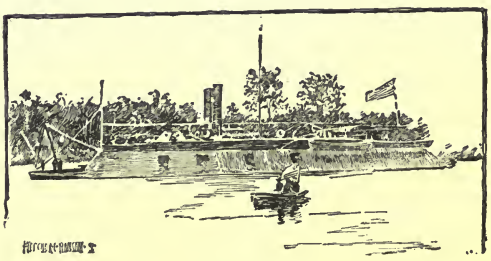
The *Cairo.*

From a photograph.

to fly among the branches of trees that were to be used in building the hulls of these vessels, and the shops that were to supply the iron were and had been idle ever since hostilities had stopped the business of the country.

As the event showed, Eads was for the Mississippi what Ericsson was on the coast. He was a man of original ideas. And yet, as Porter says, "it is strange how slowly even

the cleverest of men receive new ideas." He built ironclads, it is true, but with the smooth water in which he was to send them afloat they might have carried a thickness of armor fit to turn the heaviest shot instead of the boiler plate that was used. As described by Eads himself, these boats "were to draw six feet of water, carry thirteen heavy guns each, be plated with two-and-a-half-inch iron, and have a speed of nine miles an hour. The *De Kalb* (at first called the *St. Louis*) was the type of the other six, named the *Carondelet*, *Cincinnati*, *Louisville*, *Mound City*, *Cairo*, and *Pittsburg*. They were 175 feet long, 51½ feet beam; the flat sides sloped at an angle of about thirty-five degrees, and the front and rear casemates corresponded with the sides, the stern-wheel being entirely covered by the rear casemate. Each gun-boat was pierced for three bow guns, eight broadside guns (four on a side), and two stern guns. Before these seven gun-boats were completed, I engaged to



The *Pittsburg*.
After a photograph.

convert the snag-boat *Benton* into an armored vessel of still larger dimensions."

Each was propelled by a single paddle-wheel set into the stern, where it was protected by the fork-shaped hull as well as a casemate. The boats were expected to fight bow on, and the iron plate across the bow was backed by two feet of oak. On the sides opposite the boilers the iron armor was not backed save by a slender supporting frame, while the stern had neither armor nor oak wall. The pilot-house was of good oak covered with two and a half inches of iron in front and an inch less in the rear. The crews had every incentive to keep the bow of the ship toward the enemy.

"The armament was determined by the exigencies of the time. The army supplied thirty-five old forty-two-pounders, which were rifled and so threw a seventy-pound shell. These having lost the metal cut away for grooves, and not being banded, were called upon to endure the increased strain of firing rifled projectiles with actually less strength than had been allowed for the discharge of a round ball of about half the weight. Such makeshifts are characteristic of nations that do not prepare for war, and *will doubtless occur again in the experience of our navy.*" So says Mahan.

The *Benton* had been a snag-boat—a craft

The Mississippi Fleet off Mound City, Illinois.

From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall.

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with two hulls so joined and strengthened that she could get the largest kind of a cottonwood tree between the hulls, hoist it out of the mud, and drag it clear of the steamer channel. She had had two wheels, but one between the hulls was substituted, and the whole was built over into the semblance of an angular turtle, and armored with plates of iron three and a half inches thick, well backed with oak. She was a five-knot boat and of deep draft for the service (nine feet), but she was at that date the most powerful warship afloat, and "she went by the name of the *Old War Horse*." She carried sixteen guns, of which two were nine-inch Dahlgrens.

Another vessel, like the *Benton*, was called the *Essex*, because commanded by Capt. William Porter, a son of the Porter of *Essex* fame. "After bearing a creditable part in the battle of Fort Henry she became separated by the batteries of Vicksburg from the upper squadron, and is less identified with its history." She carried one ten-inch and three nine-inch guns besides several smaller ones.

Other vessels were added to this upper Mississippi squadron from time to time, but "they bore no proportionate share in the fighting. The eight (from the Eads' yards) may be fairly called the ships of the line of battle on the Western waters."

Commander John Rodgers was relieved by Flag Officer Foote on September 6, 1861. He brought a number of younger officers who were to command the ships of the new fleet while taking orders from the commanding general of that department. Among these was Commander Henry Walke, who had saved Fort Pickens at Pensacola, as already told, by disobeying orders. Walke was sent to the *Taylor*.

A. H. Foote.

From a photograph.

These salt-water fighters found strange materials awaiting them—ships such as they had never dreamed of in connection with war, and men from the river banks and the corn-fields who knew nothing of great guns and less, were that possible, of the restraints of naval discipline. Nevertheless, the effects of naval discipline made first-class tars out of the raw material, and the gunboats proved good enough for the occasion.

The first actual conflict between the gun-

boats and the Confederates was on September 10, 1861, when Grant (who was then under Fremont) determined to dislodge a body of Confederates stationed on the west side of the Mississippi, eight miles below Cairo, and near Norfolk, Missouri. The *Conestoga*, Captain Phelps, and the *Lexington*, Captain Stembel, were sent down. They found the Confederates had sixteen field-pieces and a considerable body of cavalry. There was a lively bit of cannonading for a time, and two Confederate gunboats (converted river steamers) came up to join in. The Confederates' guns were silenced, and then the government gunboats returned to Cairo.

A number of equally fruitless skirmishes followed. On November 7th there was quite a battle at Belmont, on the Missouri side of the river, opposite Columbus, Kentucky. Grant, with between 3,000 and 4,000 men, went down the river in transports convoyed by the gunboats *Taylor*, Captain Walke, and *Lexington*, Captain Phelps. They landed just out of range of the Iron Bluff forts above Columbus, and attacked the Confederates at Belmont with success, while gunboats under Walke shelled the works on the Columbus side. Although each boat might have been penetrated and its boiler exploded by a stray grapeshot, they were repeatedly carried by Walke, who was

senior officer afloat, under the Confederate batteries. The reader should understand that taking a frail steamboat under the fire of heavy guns is a much more dangerous affair than going under fire with an old-fashioned ship with sails; for one shot could scarcely disable even a thin-walled sailing ship, but one shot into a steamer's boiler not only disabled her, but slaughtered her crew with the steam. Walke and Phelps showed great gallantry on this occasion.

The Confederate troops were driven to their transports at first, but they rallied and were reinforced from the Columbus side of the river until they numbered about 7,000. Grant then retreated, and his troops were in some disorder, for they were yet undisciplined.

When Grant was compelled to retreat, Walke took the *Taylor* within a few yards of the banks where the Union troops embarked and drove off the victorious Confederates. It is not unlikely that Grant would have been captured but for Walke's timely aid, for he was the last man to board the transports, and the Confederates were at hand in force with plenty of field-guns to sink the Union transports.

The next operation of importance was the capture of Fort Henry on the Tennessee River, just south of the Kentucky line. It was the

The Battle of Belmont: First Attack by the *Taylor* and the *Lexington.*

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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first of the advances into the Confederate territory by way of the rivers of the West. On February 2, 1862, Flag Officer Foote assembled at Paducah, at the mouth of the Tennessee, the ironclad gunboats *Essex*, Capt. William D. Porter; *Carondelet*, Captain Walke; *St. Louis*, Captain Paulding; and *Cincinnati*, Captain Stembel; besides the three wooden gunboats *Conestoga*, *Taylor*, and *Lexington* to act as a reserve. Here the troops under Grant were embarked on transports, and the expedition proceeded cautiously up the river—cautiously because a boastful woman in a wayside house had told a scouting party that the ships would be blown out of water by torpedoes before passing an island just below the fort. On Tuesday, February 3d, the expedition had arrived within a few miles of Fort Henry, and the troops were landed, and a combined assault by the ironclads and the troops was ordered. But before the movement could be made, a tremendous storm came on; the river rose until the gunboats, with both anchors down, had to keep their engines going at full speed to hold their own against the tide and the flotsam.

To the impatient sailors this seemed a misfortune, but after a time they saw they were enjoying the greatest good luck, for there were full-sized trees in the flood, and these swept

the torpedoes clear of their moorings and brought them floating down. Small boats were sent out to gather them in, and very ugly things they were—cylinders of sheet iron big enough to hold seventy-five pounds of powder, with a lock and trigger that should catch on a boat's bottom and explode the powder.

However, on the 6th the water was low enough to permit an advance. Flag Officer Foote went to the ships to inspect the crews, and told the gunners that every shot cost the government eight dollars, so none must be wasted. They were to aim at the guns of the fort—*aim*, and not merely point in the direction.

Finally, the soldiers on shore waded away through the mud, and the gunboats steamed slowly up the river.

The fort they were to attack was a well-planned earthwork mounting twenty guns, but of these only eleven or twelve (accounts differ) could be brought to bear on the approaching fleet. The best of these was a sixty-pounder rifle, but a ten-inch medium-weight shell gun and two forty-two-pounders supported it, and the rest were thirty-twos. As the gunboats were to fight bows on, they could bring to bear twelve guns, of which two were nine-inch Dahlgrens, and the rest sixty-four-pounders,

Battle of Belmont: U. S. Gunboats Repulsing the Enemy during the Debarkation.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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Interior of the *Taylor* during the Battle of Belmont.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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or better. The weight of metal afloat was superior, but until the days of armored ships one gun in a fort was counted equal to from three to five afloat.

By any reasonable standard here was as fair a fight as one could hope to find between ships and forts at that day, and at 12.30 o'clock on Friday, February 6, 1862, the *Cincinnati* (the flagship) fired her three bow guns simultaneously at an estimated range of 1,700 yards. The wily gunners on the other ships, remembering Flag Officer Foote's warning about wasting shot, waited to see the effect of these shots, and saw them all fall short. "So there was $24 worth of ammunition wasted," writes an officer of the *Essex*; but the gunners had learned the range, and "Jack Mathews, an old tar who had seen much service on men-o'-war, and was always restive under the command of a volunteer officer," was the first to get his gun elevated, and the first to fire when the word came.

A fresh breeze athwart the bows drove the smoke away, and a shout arose as the shell from Jack's gun burst in the parapet under one of the Confederate guns and covered it with the soft earth.

The squadron advanced slowly but steadily, reducing the elevation of the guns from seven to six and then five degrees, and cutting the

fuses of the shells shorter and shorter. Every shot reached home in the parapet, and some passed clear through to lodge in and fire the barracks of the Confederates. The Confederates fought back stubbornly. "The fort seemed a blaze of fire." Their shells drove the officers of the boats down into the casemates, but when the casemates were struck the projectiles bounded clear, doing little or no harm until the battle had raged for nearly fifty minutes. Then the gunner in charge of the Confederate rifle got the range of the *Essex* and drove his sixty-pound shell right through her bow armor just above a port. Continuing its flight, it took off the head of Master's Mate Brittain and plunged into the middle boiler located amidships.

In an instant the deck was deluged with steam and scalding water, and the crew who could reach them went plunging through the ports, while the ship herself began drifting with the current out of the fight.

When the steam had exhausted itself the men from aft hastened forward. The deck was covered with men dead or writhing in their last agony. "Marshall Ford, who was steering, was found at the wheel, standing erect, his left hand holding the spoke and his right hand grasping the signal-bell rope," dead at his post.

Battle of Fort Henry.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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The men who had been working the bow guns from the first had just been relieved and sent aft to rest, but Jack Mathews had his blood up and had obtained permission to stay at his gun. He was among those who crawled through the port and was picked up by the boats, but he died that night. In all, twenty-nine men were scalded, and more than half of them died. Captain Porter was one of the severely scalded.

But while one ship was disabled by a well-directed shot, the other three steadily advanced, and their shot told with increasing effect. The Confederate rifle burst a few minutes later, and the ten-inch shell gun was spiked with its own priming wire. Five other guns were disabled by the fire of the gunboats, and this fire was rapidly becoming more deadly, for they were soon less than 500 yards away. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman, the Confederate commander, had "done all that could be done to defend his charge, and saying, 'It is vain to fight longer—our gunners are disabled, our guns dismounted—we can't hold out five minutes longer,' he ordered a white flag hoisted."

As the firing ceased the *Carondelet* grounded, and the steam on the flagship *Cincinnati* having been shut off, she began drifting with the current. To Flag Officer Foote it seemed that the *Carondelet* was steaming ahead of the flag-

ship, and Foote ordered her to fall back. Of course she could not do so. Foote became excited at the seeming insolence of Captain Walke, and, running forward, he shouted himself hoarse, and then a junior officer tried it also. Finally the *Carondelet* got free, and the matter was explained; but it is apparent, from the published memoirs of the two men, that ill-feeling prevailed between them thereafter.

Tilghman went on board the *Cincinnati* and surrendered to Foote, for the army under Grant was detained by the muddy roads, and did not arrive until an hour after the fort had been silenced. It was a victory for the gunboats exclusively.

The importance of taking the fort appears when it is recalled that it was a main point in the frontier chain of Confederate posts that extended from Columbus, Kentucky, on the Mississippi, east to the Cumberland Mountains. The way to the interior of Tennessee was open, and the Confederate positions at Bowling Green and Columbus, Kentucky, were becoming untenable because the Union forces were in their rear.

Foote returned to Cairo immediately with three ironclads, leaving the *Carondelet* at Fort Henry, while the three unarmored gunboats were sent up the river to destroy the bridge of the main line of railroad from Mem-

phis to the East, thus cutting off rail communication between the Confederate capital and all the western parts of Kentucky and Tennessee. Lieutenant Phelps was in charge of these boats, and after reaching the bridge, he left the *Taylor* to destroy both bridge and trestle-work while he pushed on with the other two. Three Confederate steamers, two of which were loaded with military stores, were grounded and fired above the bridge when Phelps appeared, and there was a tremendous explosion when they blew up.

Continuing on to Cerro Gordo, near the Mississippi State line, he captured a river steamer called the *Eastport*, that was already partly converted into a gunboat. Further up two more steamers were captured, and three others were fired by the Confederates. The raid extended to Florence, and was one of the notably brave deeds on Western waters.

The *Eastport* was taken into the government service, and Phelps commanded her until she ran on a torpedo in the Red River two years later and was destroyed.

From Fort Henry the gunboats turned to Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River. This fort, although on another river, was but twelve miles from Fort Henry. It was a much stronger position. As described by Mahan, "the main work was on a bluff about

a hundred feet high, at a bend commanding the river below. On the slope of the ridge, looking down stream, were two water batteries, with which alone the fleet had to do. The lower and principal one mounted eight 32-pounders and a X-inch columbiad; in the upper there were two 32-pounder carronades and one gun of the size of a X-inch smooth-bore, but rifled with the bore of a 32-pounder and said to throw a shot of one hundred and twenty-eight pounds. Both batteries were excavated in the hillside, and the lower had traverses between the guns to protect them from an enfilading fire, in case the boats should pass their front and attack them from above. At the time of the fight these batteries were thirty-two feet above the level of the river."

Foote thought the position too strong for the gunboats because the forts could deliver a plunging fire that would strike on top, where the gunboats were not armored, but he consented to join the expedition. Meantime Grant had sent the *Carondelet*, Captain Walke, around in advance of the others, and she arrived within range of Fort Donelson at 11 o'clock A.M. on February 12, 1862. Grant arrived overland an hour later.

To announce her arrival to General Grant the *Carondelet* threw a few shells at the enemy and then dropped down out of range. Next

Upper Battery. Water Battery. Grant's army attacking, in distance. U. S. Gunboats

Battle of Fort Donelson.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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day, by order of Grant, the *Carondelet* took a partly sheltered position behind a point, and at a range of a mile and a quarter fired 184 shells into the fort to divert the attention of the Confederates as much as possible from General Grant. She was twice hit by the return fire, and one shot penetrated, wounding a few men with splinters.

On the night of the 13th Foote, with the *St. Louis*, *Louisville*, and *Pittsburg*, arrived, and at 3 P.M. on the 14th the squadron advanced in line abreast to the attack. Opening fire at a range of a mile, they steadily lessened the range until at last within 400 yards of the lower Confederate battery. The Confederates were rapidly abandoning their guns at this moment (4.30 P.M.), when a shot passed through the pilot-house of the flagship *St. Louis*, wounding Foote seriously, the pilot also, and smashing the wheel; and at the same moment a shell cut the tiller ropes of the *Louisville*. The preventer tackles that had been provided proved utterly inadequate in both cases—a most serious fault that should have been foreseen—and both vessels drifted helplessly out of the fight.

Seeing this, the Confederates rallied to their guns and renewed the fight. The *Carondelet* and *Pittsburg* were soon seriously damaged, and followed the disabled boats down stream.

Mahan says of this fight: "Notwithstanding its failure, the tenacity and fighting qualities of the fleet were more markedly proved in this action than in the victory at Henry. The vessels were struck more frequently (the flag-ship fifty-nine times, and none less than twenty), and though the power of the enemy's guns was about the same in each case, the height and character of the soil at Donelson placed the fleet at a great disadvantage. The fire from above, reaching their sloping armor nearly at right angles, searched every weak point. Upon the *Carondelet* a rifled gun burst. The pilot-houses were beaten in, and three of the four pilots received mortal wounds. Despite these injuries, and the loss of fifty-four killed and wounded, the fleet was only shaken from its hold by accidents to the steering apparatus, after which their batteries could not be brought to bear.

"Among the injured on this occasion was the flag-officer, who was standing by the pilot when the latter was killed. Two splinters struck him in the arm and foot, inflicting wounds apparently slight; but the latter, amid the exposure and anxiety of the succeeding operations, did not heal, and finally compelled him, three months later, to give up the command."

The Confederates surrendered to Grant on

Explosion on Board the *Carondelet* at the Battle of Fort Donelson.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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the 16th. It was an army victory. Nashville fell on the 25th, and on March 1st the Confederates began to evacuate Columbus, on the Mississippi. No attempt was made by the Confederates to hold Hickman, the next town down the Mississippi, but they fortified Island No. 10, that lay in the river opposite the dividing line between Kentucky and Tennessee, and both banks of the river. The position there was particularly strong. The river, for some distance, flowed south until the island was reached, and then turned to the northwest, and sweeping around a horseshoe bend, came back again to its old line and continued on south. The island lay right in the pocket of the sharp bend where the river turned to the northwest. The current was strong and full of eddies, and the channel lay right under the muzzles of the guns that were placed to defend it. "On the island itself were four batteries mounting twenty-three guns, on the Tennessee shore six batteries mounting thirty-two guns. There was also a floating battery, which, at the beginning of operations, was moored abreast the middle of the island, and is variously reported as carrying nine or ten IX-inch guns." So says Mahan.

Nevertheless, the Union forces were sweeping down, and this stronghold had to yield, and the most interesting fact in connection with its

capture was the brave dash of an American sailor, Captain Walke of the *Carondelet.*

Pope captured New Madrid, on the Missouri side of the river, on March 3d, and began fortifying the river below that town. A glance at the map will show this necessarily cut off river communications between Island No. 10 and the Confederates down stream. But the Confederates could come to Tiptonville, and from that place a good road led across the neck of land three miles to the shore opposite Island No. 10, and that was but a small overland journey for supplies. However, supplies could come by no other route, because the region east of the island was one vast swamp. Accordingly Pope determined to cross over to Tiptonville and so shut the Confederates in.

Meantime Foote's flotilla had arrived in the river just above Island No. 10, bringing along a number of mortar boats—mere floating platforms carrying a thirteen-inch mortar each. Pope soon sent to Foote, asking that a couple of the gunboats be sent down the river, on the first favorable night, past the Confederate batteries to New Madrid to serve as ferryboats for the troops and to cover the landing. To this request Foote sent a positive refusal, although Capt. Henry Walke, of the *Carondelet*, was urgent in asking permission to make the run. Foote said that the risk was too great,

U. S. Flotilla Descending the Mississippi River.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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Battle with Fort No. 1 above Island No. 10.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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and he could not afford to lose even one ship from his present command. But he added that when "the object of running the blockade becomes adequate to the risk," he would consent.

This unexpected attitude of Foote delayed the capture of the island about two weeks. At the suggestion of Schuyler Hamilton, a channel was cut through the trees of the swamp from the Mississippi to New Madrid. There was water enough there to float shoal transports and barges, and when this work was done and the transports for ferry use were lying in the bayou behind New Madrid, Foote gave Captain Walke, of the *Carondelet*, permission to try running the batteries.

Captain Walke got his orders on March 30th. To prepare his ship for the iron deluge he put extra planking over her deck, and then ranged her chain cables across it to serve as additional armor—a use of chain cables that became famous in the one great naval duel of the Civil War, as will appear further on. Lumber and cord wood were piled where they would protect the boiler and engines, and the pilot-house was wrapped with ropes to a thickness of eighteen inches, while the escape-pipes were changed so as to exhaust in the wheel-box, that thus the puffing or coughing noise of the high-pressure engines then in use

should be drowned. To still further protect her, a barge loaded with baled hay was lashed on the left side, which was the one that must receive the Confederate fire. The resourcefulness of Captain Walke was well shown in these preparations.

The night of April 10, 1862, was selected for the dash. The moon set at 10 o'clock that night and, as fortune favored, a heavy thunderstorm came on. Lifting her anchors as the first breath of the squall arrived, the *Carondelet* swung around and headed down the stream. The crew were at quarters, and every man but two was under cover. One, a seaman, Charles Wilson, stood at the rail heaving the lead, while Theodore Gilmore stood half-way between him and the pilot-house to pass the whispered call of the leadsman. By the time they were heading their course the rain began to fall in sheets, and the monotonous words "no bottom" from the leadsman were drowned, as was the puffing of the engine. Not a lamp was burning anywhere about the ship. The pilot, William R. Hall, was a man who could feel his way. But just before the batteries were reached, the boat met the one contingency for which no provision was made. Wood was used as fuel in the furnaces, and the soot in the chimney caught fire and went blazing up from the top of the smoke-stack.

The lightning, too, was streaming across the sky, and "the gallant little ship floated like a phantom" before the eyes of the Confederates, who ran to their guns, and in a moment set the batteries flaming. The roar of the cannon echoed to the boom and rumble of the thunder. But the lightning that revealed the "phantom ship" blinded the eyes of the gunners, and they strove in vain to aim their guns with accuracy. The *Carondelet* passed unharmed, and the fate of Island No. 10 was sealed.

The hardy spirit of the brave Walke has never been sufficiently appreciated. This was because other batteries were run safely later on. But Walke was not only the pioneer. He alone of all the captains in Foote's command favored the project from the first. The others "believed that it would result in the almost certain destruction of the boat, passing six forts under the fire of fifty guns." He was willing to face the danger when all previous experience made even the most daring of his associates believe the task impossible. Nor was the danger from the batteries the only one, for it must not be forgotten that the Confederates had a half dozen well-armed gunboats at New Orleans, besides the ram *Manassas*, that created so great a panic at the mouth of the Mississippi. The *Carondelet*,

when below the Confederate batteries, was for the time cut off from all support. The power of the Confederate fleet was exaggerated at the time, as we now know, but the officers of Foote's flotilla had no means of learning the real facts. Moreover, it would have been rank folly for them to underestimate the power of the enemy.

It is worth telling that Island No. 10 has disappeared under the action of the current, and the main channel lies where the Confederate batteries stood.

On April 6th Pope crossed over to Tiptonville under cover of Walke's guns. On that day, also, Grant fought the Confederates at Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee. The *Taylor*, under Lieutenant Gwin, and the *Lexington*, Lieutenant Shirk, had part in that battle. During the afternoon the Confederates made a desperate attempt to turn Grant's left and capture the landing place and transports. Gwin opened fire and silenced their batteries. At 4 o'clock the *Lexington* arrived, and the two gunboats silenced the Confederate batteries three-quarters of a mile above the landing. Again at 5.30 the Confederates came in such force against Grant's left that they arrived within an eighth of a mile of the landing, but the boats then drove them back in confusion. It is not unlikely that Grant would have been

The *Carondelet* Running the Gauntlet at Island No. 10.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

The *Carondelet* Attacking the Forts below Island No. 10.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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entirely overwhelmed by the superior force of the Confederates but for the support of the gunboats. They enabled him to hold out until reinforcements came. And that night, to quote a Confederate account, "the enemy broke the men's rest by a discharge, at measured intervals, of heavy shells thrown from the gunboats." The Confederates could not sleep because a great shell was dropped somewhere in their camp, bringing death and disaster every fifteen minutes. Imagine those soldiers lying there all night counting the time as they waited for the next shell.

The next matter of interest in the story of the Mississippi flotilla was what may be called an irregular squadron battle. Island No. 10 surrendered on May 7, 1862, and the government fleet advanced until near Fort Pillow, which the Confederates had erected on the First Chickasaw Bluffs, not far above the Hatchie River. Here a stand was made awaiting the coöperation of the army. Foote, suffering from his wound, had to be relieved. Capt. Charles H. Davis took his place on May 9th. The fleet at this time numbered seven gunboats, four of which were stationed on the Arkansas (westerly) shore and three on the Tennessee side. They were the *Mound City*, Capt. A. H. Kilty; *Cincinnati*, Capt. R. N. Stembel; *St. Louis*, Capt. Henry Erben;

Cairo, Capt. N. C. Bryant; *Benton* (flagship), Capt. S. L. Phelps; *Carondelet*, Capt. Henry Walke; and *Pittsburg*, Capt. Egbert Thompson.

It was the custom while lying there to send one of the gunboats every day to tow a mortar boat to a mooring under Craighead's Point, where it could throw shells into Fort Pillow, the gunboat lying handy by meantime to protect the mortar boat from Confederate boats known to be in the river below the fort.

The Confederate gunboats were the ordinary river boats converted into warships by putting cotton bales and pine timber about the boilers, and by casing the bows with iron, and in other ways adding to their strength forward so that they became, after a fashion, rams. Each carried at least one gun. This work was done by the pilots themselves at New Orleans, and the old line navy officers there were not allowed to interfere. When ready, eight of these boats had been sent up to Fort Pillow, nominally under Capt. J. E. Montgomery, one of the pilots, but, as a matter of fact, each captain did as he pleased, and the wonder is that anything worth mention should have been accomplished.

Early on May 10th the government gunboat *Cincinnati* towed a mortar boat to its post, and then tied herself to a snag near by.

U. S. Gunboats Capturing the Confederate Forts below Island No. 10, April 7th.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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At 5 o'clock the mortar hurled its first shell into Fort Pillow, and thereafter continued its work until 6 o'clock, when a dense smoke was seen rising in the air below Fort Pillow. The Confederate rams were leaving their landing for a dash at the mortar boat and the *Cincinnati*. The *Cincinnati* quickly slipped her moorings, and running out into the river, faced the Confederates—faced them alone, although the whole Confederate flotilla was in plain sight of the government flotilla long before they reached the *Cincinnati*. Apparently Flag Officer Davis overslept that morning.

As the Confederates came in range the *Cincinnati* opened fire and stood her ground. The Confederates scattered at once, but continued advancing. The leading Confederate boat, the *General Bragg*, hugged the Arkansas shore, passed above the *Cincinnati*, and then turning around, drove her bow into the unprotected quarter of the lone government boat. The two boats were alongside each other in a moment, and the *Cincinnati* gave the Confederate boat a broadside that sent her skurrying down the stream and out of the battle.

Behind the *Bragg* came two more Confederates, the *Price* and the *Sumter*, firing with guns and muskets at the ports of the *Cincinnati*, while one of them rammed her again in the place where the *Bragg* had struck her, and

at the same moment Captain Stembel fell with a ball through his throat that well-nigh proved mortal, and the executive officer was mortally hurt.

Meantime Flag Officer Davis woke up, while Captain Kilty, of the *Mound City*, without waiting for orders, started to the aid of the mobbed *Cincinnati*. Captain Walke, with the *Carondelet*, was not far behind him, but both were three miles away from the scene of conflict when they started. The *Carondelet* was the first to open fire, and the first shot raked the fleeing *Bragg*. Another shell struck the *Price* at the water-line, cutting a water-supply pipe and causing her to leak so badly that she was thrown out of the fight.

But while aid was coming the *Cincinnati* was run into shoal water, and there she sank. The *Mound City* had meantime been firing at the Confederates, and the *Van Dorn* turned to ram her. She avoided the full strength of the blow by a skilful use of the helm, but she was cut into, nevertheless, and had to be run ashore on the Arkansas side to keep her from sinking. The *Pittsburg* had been obliged to go to the assistance of the *Cincinnati* to get her into shoal water, and the *Cairo* rendered the same service to the *Mound City*. This left only the flagship *Benton*, the *Carondelet*, and the *St. Louis* to continue the battle with the six

Battle of Fort Pillow.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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remaining Confederate gunboats, though it must be said that the guns of both the *Pittsburg* and the *Cairo* were still firing at the Confederates. But the Confederates retreated as soon as the belated *Benton* and *St. Louis* got fairly into the fight. Flag Officer Montgomery said he retreated because the government boats all went into water too shoal for his rams, while their guns were far heavier as well as much more numerous than his. As to the guns, he had only thirty-two-pounders, but it is certain that neither the *Benton*, the *Carondelet*, or the *St. Louis* went into shoal water. In fact, the *Benton* drew more water than any of the Confederate "River Defence Squadron," as it was called, and the other two government boats quite as much as any.

The fact is, Montgomery's force was a lot of militia afloat. They made a most brilliant dash at the government forces, sank two gunboats, and then, militia fashion, got out of it when they were really just ready to begin to fight. Not one of their boats was seriously hurt. The *Bragg* had lost her tiller ropes, and the *Price* was aleak, but both might have continued the fight after a few minutes devoted to repairs. The whole force was, so far as hurts were concerned, "ready for action at Memphis a month later." As to the government force, it may be said that Stembel, on the

Cincinnati, made a brilliant defence, and Walke and Kilty, of the *Carondelet* and *Mound City*, seemed to fully appreciate what was required under the circumstances. The unprotected mortar boat, Acting Master Gregory, kept up a steady fire on the Confederates throughout the conflict, and Gregory was promoted for his bravery.

Soon after this fight the government flotilla was reinforced by seven river steamers that had been converted into rams along the Ohio River by Col. Charles Ellet, Jr. Part of them were stern-wheelers and part side-wheelers. They were strengthened with fore-and-aft bulkheads, and the boilers were protected with two feet of oak. Ellet had independent charge of them, with instructions to coöperate with the gunboats under Flag Officer Davis.

Meantime the advance of the government army in Tennessee had made it impossible for the Confederates to hold Fort Pillow, and it was evacuated on June 4, 1862. On the evening of the 5th the government flotilla came to anchor just above Memphis, that was yet in Confederate control. The Confederate fleet was seen at the levee next morning, but they soon cast off and took a position where the Union fleet could not fire on them without danger of throwing shells into the city. It was to be the last battle between the two flo-

The Battle of Fort Pillow.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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tillas, and a great throng of citizens gathered on the bluffs.

The government gunboats started at 4.20 o'clock and dropped slowly down, stern first, until the Confederates opened fire, when they turned about and returned the fire with vigor. The Union rams under Ellet had, until this time, kept in the rear, but when the firing began two of them—the *Queen of the West* and the *Monarch*, swift vessels for their day—took advantage of the smoke, dashed through the government line, and boldly headed for the Confederate boats.

This attack was wholly unexpected, and the crowds of Memphis citizens on the heights groaned aloud. The officers of the Confederate ships were startled, too. Some of their vessels swerved about under the nervous handling of their tiller wheels, and that gave the gallant Ellet the opportunity he hoped for. With the *Queen of the West* he crashed fairly into the broadside of the Confederate ship *Lovell*, and she sank out of sight immediately. But as the *Queen of the West* hauled clear, the quick-witted pilot of the Confederate ram *Beauregard* rammed her, and she was headed for the Arkansas shore, where she grounded. The government ram *Monarch* was close behind the *Queen of the West*, and the Confederate rams *Beauregard* and *Price* made a dash

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at her from opposite sides. She cleverly eluded them, and they crashed together, the *Beauregard* making a hole in the *Price* that sent her to the Arkansas shore.

That mishap very naturally confused the pilot of the *Beauregard*, and while he was recovering his wits the *Monarch* turned on him and rammed. Just then a shot from the *Benton* pierced the *Beauregard's* boiler, and with the steam and scalding water pouring over her crew, she surrendered. The *Monarch* took charge of her and towed her over toward the Arkansas shore, where she sank and quelled the agonies of the dying by burying them under the river.

And then, to add to the disasters of the Confederates, a shot pierced the steam-chest of the *Little Rebel*, sending her also to the morgue on the Arkansas shore.

The remainder of the Confederate squadron now turned and fled for safety, but the shells from the government flotilla were too swift for them. The *Thompson* was sunk, and the *Bragg* and *Sumter* surrendered. Only the *Van Dorn* escaped.

On the whole, this was the most interesting day in the history of the flotilla. The fight was soon over (Memphis was in the hands of the flotilla at 11 o'clock), but the Confederates fought with the greatest gallantry until four

Carondelet. *Benton.* *St. Louis.* *Lovell.* *Cairo.* *Bragg.* *Louisville.* *Van Dorn.*

The Battle of Memphis—First Position.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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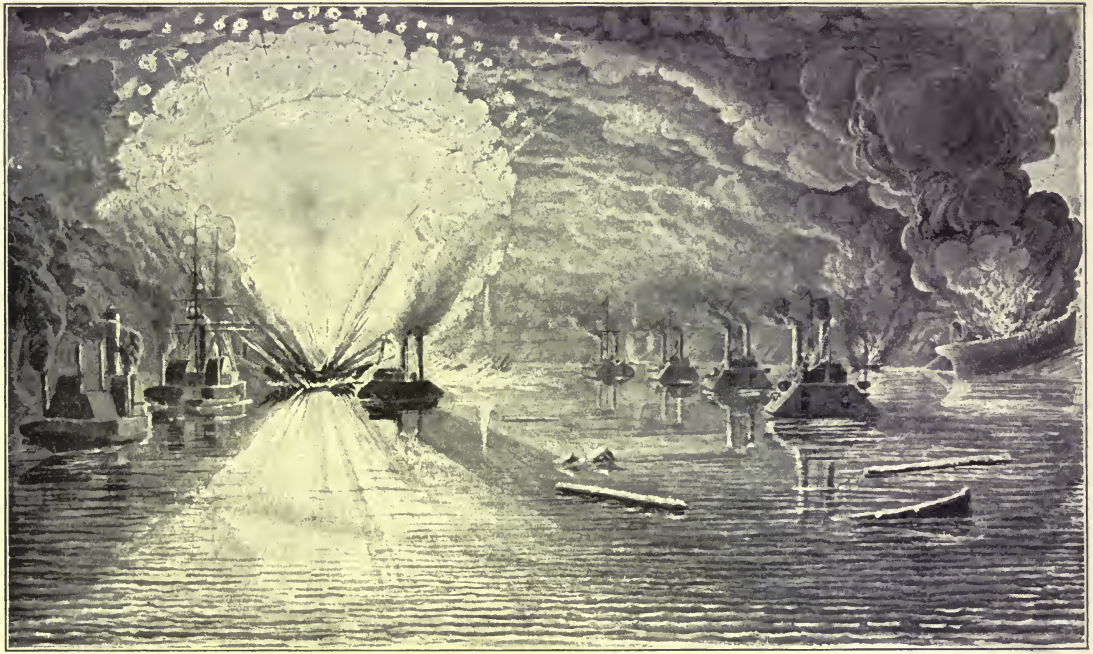

After the Battle of Memphis.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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of their ships were destroyed. The chief feature of the fight, from a naval point of view, was the destructive work of the rams, for therein one may find a foreshadowing of what shall come to pass if ever two modern squadrons are arrayed in battle. Three ships were rammed out of the conflict within fifteen or twenty minutes; the actual time does not appear. It was the first fight of steam rams in the history of the world.

While the flagship remained at Memphis until June 29th, the river was practically opened as far as Vicksburg by this fight. An expedition to coöperate with the army was sent up the White River in Arkansas, where, at Charles City, a combined attack was made by the gunboats and an Indiana regiment under Colonel Fitch, on the Confederate works. The *Mound City* was leading the gunboats, and had arrived within 600 yards of the Confederate fort, when a shell entered her casemate, killing three men and bursting her boiler. Of 175 officers and men on board, but three officers and twenty-two men escaped unhurt from the frightful blast. Eighty-two died of wounds and the scalding, and forty-three were drowned or shot in the water when they jumped overboard to escape the steam, for the Confederates continued firing at her crew when they were swimming away from her.

The other gunboats continued battle until Fitch was ready to make an assault from the rear, when they ceased firing, and Fitch carried the works by storm. The Confederate commander was Capt. Joseph Fry, who was captured and executed by the Spaniards in the *Virginius* expedition, of which he was the leader.

On June 29th Flag Officer Davis steamed down the river from Memphis, and early on the morning of July 1, 1862, came upon a government fleet lying just above Vicksburg, under the command of Admiral Farragut.

The story of Farragut's journey from the Gulf of Mexico to this point will be told in the next chapter.

Battle of Memphis—The Confederates Retreating.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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CHAPTER XII

FARRAGUT AT NEW ORLEANS

IT WAS HARD WORK GETTING THE SQUADRON INTO THE MISSISSIPPI—PREPARING THE SHIPS TO RUN BY THE FORTS GUARDING THE RIVER—MORTAR SCHOONERS HIDDEN BY TREE BRANCHES—THE FORTS WERE WELL PLANNED, BUT POORLY ARMED—A BARRIER CHAIN THAT WAS NO BARRIER AT THE LAST—THE HETEROGENEOUS CONFEDERATE SQUADRON—THE FIRE-RAFTS—WORK OF THE COAST SURVEY—BRAVERY OF CALDWELL—FOREIGNERS WHO INTERFERED—WORK OF THE MORTAR FLEET—WHEN THE SQUADRON DROVE PAST THE FORTS—SCATTERING THE CONFEDERATE SQUADRON — NEVERTHELESS, AT LEAST THREE GOOD CAPTAINS WERE FOUND AMONG THEM—SINKING THE *VARUNA*—FATE OF THE RAM *MANASSAS*—SURRENDER OF THE FORTS—END OF THE IRONCLAD *LOUISIANA*—THE WORK OF THE MISSISSIPPI SQUADRON.

In the story of the capture of New Orleans, early in the year 1862, the name of David Glasgow Farragut first appears in the annals of the Civil War. When the war began Farragut was a captain, and was awaiting orders at his home in Norfolk, Virginia. He was a Southern man by birth, and his family were of the South. A most determined effort was made by the Southern leaders to enlist him on their side; but Farragut was a man who could not forget his oath to support the Constitution

David Glasgow Farragut.

From a photograph.

of the United States. His only recorded reply to them was, "Mind what I tell you: You fellows will catch the devil before you get through with this business."

Removing his family to a home on the Hudson River, he reported himself "ready for duty," and felt some relief when he was made a member of the naval retiring board, created by a new law passed to get rid of superannuated officers. This appointment was at least a show of confidence in his loyalty. And there he was trying his official peers on a charge of old age when the expedition against New Orleans was planned.

The idea of attacking New Orleans originated with Commander David D. Porter, when in charge of the blockading steamer *Powhatan*, that, during the summer of 1861, was lying off the Southwest Pass of the Mississippi. Porter made it a point to collect all the information possible about the river and the defences, and he found the fishermen from New Orleans very good spies. Returning North, Porter went to the Secretary of the Navy. He had a knack of getting the ears of the leaders in those days, as well as some luck, as one may say, and the expedition was decided on. Of course, Porter's rank was too low for the command of such a force, but he was permitted to suggest the name of a suitable captain, and Farragut was promptly named. As the reader will remember, Farragut was reared in the old *Essex* under Commodore David Porter, and David Porter was the father of David D. Por-

ter. It was, perhaps, what may be called log-rolling for one of the family, but David D. Porter never did the nation a better service than when he spoke for Farragut.

The offer of the leadership of this expedition was eagerly accepted, and David Glasgow Farragut, whose form and features are more familiar to the eyes of the American people than those of any other naval hero, had the first opportunity of his life.

Making the *Hartford* his flagship, he sailed from Hampton Roads on February 2, 1862, and on the 20th arrived at Ship Island, near the mouth of the Mississippi. Here he gathered the following squadron:

Screw sloops: *Hartford*, twenty-four guns, Flag Officer David G. Farragut, Fleet Captain Henry H. Bell, Commander Richard Wainwright; *Pensacola*, twenty-three guns, Capt. Henry W. Morris; *Brooklyn*, twenty-two guns, Capt. Thomas T. Craven; *Richmond*, twenty-four guns, Commander James Alden.

Side-wheel steamer: *Mississippi*, seventeen guns, Commander Melancthon Smith.

Screw corvettes: *Oneida*, nine guns, Commander S. Phillips Lee; *Varuna*, ten guns, Commander Charles S. Boggs; *Iroquois*, seven guns, Commander John De Camp.

Screw gunboats: *Cayuga*, two guns, Lieut. Napoleon B. Harrison; *Itasca*, two guns,

Lieut. C. H. B. Caldwell; *Katahdin*, two guns, Lieut. George H. Preble; *Kennebec*, two guns, Lieut. John H. Russell; *Kineo*, two guns, Lieut. George M. Ransom; *Pinola*, two guns, Lieut. Pierce Crosby; *Sciota*, two guns, Lieut. Edward Donaldson; *Winona*, two guns, Lieut. Edward T. Nichols; *Wissahickon*, two guns, Lieutenant Albert N. Smith.

Of the guns on this squadron ninety-three could be fired in broadside, but none could be fired directly ahead; the pivots, however, could be fired within a point or two of the line of the keel, and were practically bow guns. More than half these guns were nine-inch smooth-bores or better.

In addition to these ships, there were twenty schooners carrying one thirteen-inch mortar each, and six gunboats (among them three ferryboats), carrying heavy guns, were assigned to handle and protect them. The mortar flotilla was placed under Porter.

It was an easy matter to get the gunboats up the river, but the big ships stuck on the bar. The *Pensacola* had to unload all of her guns as well as other weights before she could pass, and even then her bottom cut the channel a foot deeper when she was dragged through on April 7th, and the *Mississippi* had a like experience. An attempt made to drag the *Colorado* over failed altogether; but the

attempt had to be made in order to please the officials at Washington, even though two weeks of precious time were wasted.

However, Capt. Theodorus Bailey and nearly all of the crew of the *Colorado* were taken along if the ship was left behind, and on

Thirteen-inch Mortar from Farragut's Fleet.

From a photograph made at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

reaching the head of the Passes the work of preparing the ships for the task before them began.

Howitzers were placed in the tops (*i.e.*, on platforms at the tops of the lower masts), and there protected by boiler iron from musket fire. Each ship was made to draw more water

forward than aft so that she would have a better chance to get off in case of grounding. As the ships were to fight at point-blank range care was taken to secure the guns so their elevation should not increase under the shock of firing. The rigging was stripped down to the topmasts, and the spars, etc., sent ashore, while some of the gunboats took their masts out altogether. Chain cables were secured up and down the sides of the ship to ward off shot, and "bags of coal or sand or ashes, or whatever else came to hand," were piled to keep the shot from the boilers and engines. Nets were hung inside to stop the flying splinters in case of shot piercing the wooden walls. Decks and gun carriages were whitewashed to help the light for the night battle, and the outsides of the ships were smeared with mud to make them less easily visible.

The mortar schooners were disguised by lashing tree limbs to the masts in such fashion that they could not be distinguished from the trees along the banks. In short, no precaution was omitted.

As for the Confederates, they rested in perfect confidence behind the forts that had been erected to defend the river. As a glance at the map will show, there was some reason in the location, if not in the armament of these forts, for the confidence they felt. As will be

seen, the river comes down in a southerly direction until within twenty miles of the head of the Passes. There it suddenly turns to the northeast for nearly two miles, when it makes a sharp bend to the south once more. It was right on this sharp, knee-like bend that the forts were built. Fort St. Philip stood on top of the knee-bend, so to speak, and from its walls a fair view was had for a long way down the river. On the under side of the knee lay Fort Jackson. By the compass it was about due south of Fort St. Philip and but 800 yards away. Its guns pointed all over the bend of the river and away to the south, the timber on the west side of the river having been cut away to allow an unobstructed view of the stream almost to the uttermost range of the guns.

But when the guns of these forts are considered, one must say they were very poor. The Confederates made a mistake there. In all there were 109 cannon that might be used on passing ships at one point or another, but of these, fifty-six were twenty-four-pounders—excellent guns in 1812, but very small fifty years later. More than half of the others were thirty-twos and forty-twos—in fact, but fifteen of them were really guns of the day, and but two—the seven-inch rifles—could be called first-class.

New Orleans, La., and its Vicinity.

1. Mississippi River. 2. Levee. 3. St. Charles Hotel. 4. Lake Pontchartrain. 5. Fort Pike. 6. Rigolets. 7. Lake Borgne. 8. Mississippi Sound. 9. Ship Island. 10. Chandeleur Islands. 11. Gulf of Mexico. 12. Proctorsville. 13. Fort Dupré. 14. Fort St. Philip. 15. Fort Jackson. 16. Balize. 17. South Pass. 18. Southwest Pass. 19. McDonoughville. 20. Algiers.

Doubtless the Confederates depended too much on what nature had done for the defence, but they tried to add to the forces of nature by stretching a barrier from Fort Jackson to the east across the river. Barriers appeal to the unlearned mind, but they have never obstructed a fleet that was commanded by a determined man. Rafts of big cypress logs were built and anchored in line, and then chain cables taken from the Pensacola Navy Yard were stretched from trees on the Fort Jackson side over these supporting rafts to heavy anchors buried on the east side. Before Farragut arrived the floods of spring and the accumulation of drift-wood had broken the barrier, but it was renewed by substituting schooners in place of the rafts where the current was heaviest.

In addition to the forts and barrier chain, the Confederates had the support of eleven steamers and a floating battery. This battery was built as an iron-clad steamer to carry sixteen heavy guns behind plenty of armor, but there were so many strikes in the shipyard where she was built that she barely got afloat, and she was towed to a place at the forts. Her engines were never used. Had Farragut been delayed ten days more, she would have been a formidable ship, and she would have had a still more formidable consort in another and larger ship of her class that never got afloat.

She was called the *Louisiana*, and was commanded by Capt. John K. Mitchell. Another of this squadron was the ram *Manassas*, that under Lieutenant Warley had created a *Manassas*-like panic in the blockading squadron some months before. Two of the squadron belonged to the State of Louisiana. They were called the *Moore*, Capt. Beverly Kennon, and the *McRae*, Capt. Thomas B. Huger. These were cotton-clads—ocean-going steamers protected with cotton bales—very inferior as fighting ships, and yet the able Kennon made a name for himself with the *Moore*. Of the remainder of the squadron it may be said that six were of the "River Defence Squadron"—the guerrillas afloat—and that one of the captains said just before the battle that they were there "to show the naval officers how to fight."

There were also a number of unarmed vessels present, whose duty it was to handle the fireboats that had been prepared—huge coal barges loaded with fat pine knots that might have made serious trouble had they all been turned loose together at the right time. And one of these unarmed boats was the *Mosher*, with a crew of six men under Captain Sherman—the bravest man in the Confederate squadron; but because he was only a tug captain no record was made of his first name, nor

is anything said in history of his antecedents. Of the armament of the Confederate squadron little need be said. The *Louisiana* was well armed, and the rest poorly. The *Moore*, under Beverly Kennon, had two thirty-two-pounders, and she was about as well off as any.

While Farragut prepared his fleet a coast survey party under F. H. Gerdes triangulated the river, under fire at times, and set flags on the banks where the mortar schooners were to be moored. One division of these was placed on the west bank, under shelter of forest trees, and at an average distance of about 3,500 yards from the fort. The other division was on the east bank. The exact range was given to each schooner captain, and at ten o'clock in the morning on April 18, 1862, the bombardment of Fort Jackson began. The mortars were fired once in ten minutes, and the fire was continued for six days.

Mortar Boats.
From an engraving.

Meantime Lieut. C. H. B. Caldwell had requested permission to break the chain bar-

rier, and on the night of the 20th he was sent with his boat, the *Itasca*, and the *Pinola*, Lieut. Pierce Crosby commanding, to do so. While the mortar schooners dropped their shells in a shower on Fort Jackson to keep down the fire as much as possible, two of the barrier hulks were boarded, and on one of them it was found possible to slip her anchor chain. This was done, and she drifted away, leaving the barrier chain to sag down under water. Then Caldwell got above the barrier with his shoal-draft *Itasca*, passing through a narrow space between the hulks and what remained of the old raft barrier. Running up far enough for good headway, he turned back at full speed with the current to aid him, and headed for the place where the released hulk had been. As the *Itasca* struck the sagging chain with her curved bow, she rose more than three feet out of water, and then the chain snapped under her weight, and away she went. The barrier was effectually broken, and the route to New Orleans was open. All this was done under heavy fire, but there was no picket boat guarding the chain.

At this time the British frigate *Mersey*, Captain Preedy, and a Frenchman were lying with Farragut's fleet. These two foreigners steamed up the river to examine the barrier, and on coming back were at great pains to

inform the Union forces that the forts were in perfect order and the barrier absolutely impassable. The French were at that time planning to establish an emperor on a throne in Mexico.

As said, for six days the mortar flotilla hurled shells high in air to drop in and around Fort Jackson. By day each mortar threw a shell every ten minutes—the flotilla of twenty threw 120 per hour—and at night they threw one every half-hour each. On the 19th one of the schooners was sunk by a shot from the fort, and another was thrown out of the fight later on; but on an average about 1,900 shells were thrown each day. The effect of these shells was to destroy all the buildings in the fort, and, by cutting the levee, to flood the floors of the bomb-proofs. They kept the men under cover, and rendered them so uncomfortable that in the end they became desperate. What they did then will be told further on. The garrison lost fourteen killed and thirty-nine wounded in the course of the fighting.

Having the way clear, Farragut, on the 23d of April, 1862, issued his orders for an advance that night. The squadron was divided into two divisions, and Capt. Theodorus Bailey had the honor of commanding the first division. His division flag was hoisted on the *Cayuga*, that was to lead the line in what was

supposed to be the post of real danger. A ship's cutter under Caldwell rowed up to the break in the barrier and found it still open. The Confederates had a big wood-fire burning, and the cutter crossed its light, but was not attacked. It was a dark, still night—not the best for the work—but at 2 o'clock in the morning of the 24th two red lanterns were hoisted at the peak of the flagship *Hartford*, and a moment later the shrill piping of the boatswain's whistle was heard throughout the squadron with the call " All hands up anchor !"

The merry click of the pawls as the men walked around the great capstans soon rose on the still air—rose so high that it reached up to the sentinels on Fort Jackson and roused the garrison to a knowledge that an important action impended. It was a long task to get the anchors of the largest ships, for they were breasting a three-knot current, but soon after 3 o'clock they all got under way, and Porter's mortars, firing as fast as the men could tong the shells into them, began drawing an almost unbroken arch of fiery bombs from the schooners to Fort Jackson. The nation had never seen such a display of fireworks as that. At 3.30 o'clock precisely the division leader *Cayuga* passed in silence through the barrier, followed by the huge *Pensacola*, and then a flaming storm broke loose from the forts.

Huge piles of wood were lighted on the shore to illuminate the river, and away up-stream the blaze of fire-rafts opened the murk of night to reveal the Confederate ships, weird and indistinct of outline, scattered along the shores. The Union gunboats dashed ahead at full speed, but the *Pensacola* and *Mississippi* steamed slowly, their black hulls at regular intervals sheeting the air with lurid fire as they replied to the forts. Abreast of St. Philip, where the Confederate fire was hottest, they drew in so close that the gunners afloat and those ashore heartily cursed each other as they worked. With fierce energy the men ashore drove shot and shell into the wooden ships, while those afloat dusted the rampart with hurtling showers of grape and canister. And these were showers that no man could face, and the garrison fled to cover for a moment, but they returned again as the blasts ceased with the passing of each ship.

For the first division it was at first but a simple journey. They were through the barrier and away before the Confederates fully realized what was upon them. But for Farragut, at the head of the second division, it was another matter. The clouds of smoke from the batteries settled low upon the water to blind the pilots, and then came the blazing fire-rafts to add to the confusion and the dan-

Porter's Mortar Fleet. Farragut's Fleet Passing the Forts.

Beginning of the Battle of New Orleans.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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ger. As it happened, it was the *Hartford* that caught the first of these rafts. She had grounded in the smoke and was trying to back off, when the Confederate tug *Mosher* shoved the flaming barge against her. In an instant the paint on the whole side of the ship was flaming up almost to the lower yards.

As the flames rose, the men at the guns on that side drew back, but they faced the danger again as Farragut shouted:

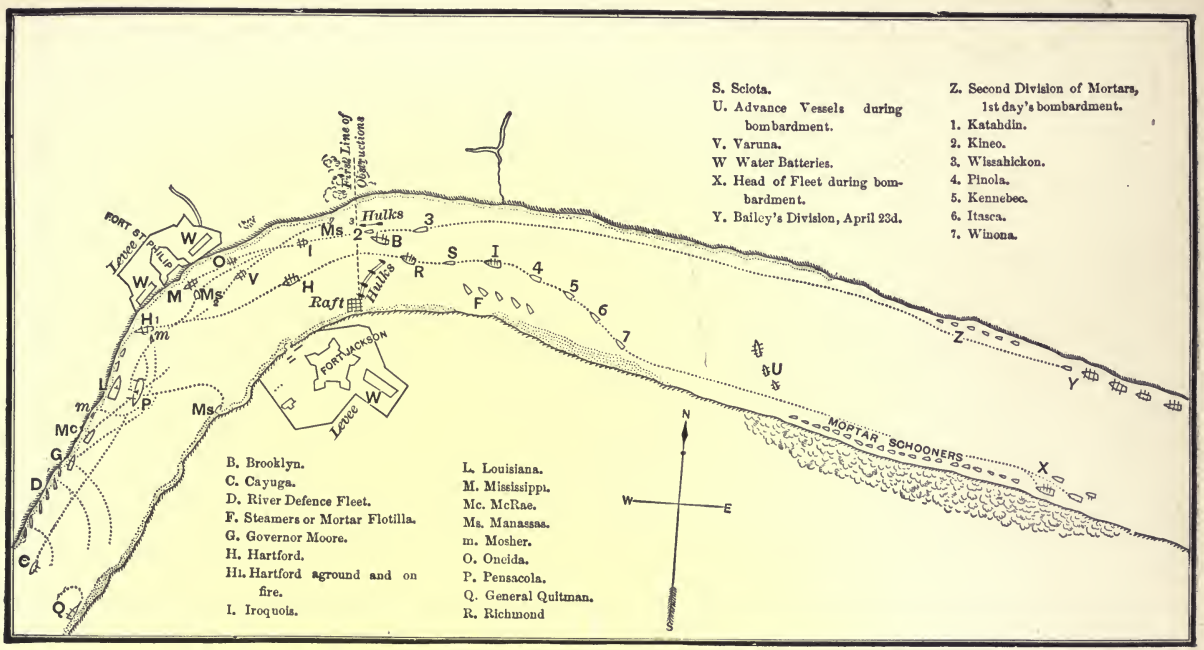
"Don't flinch from that fire, boys; there's a hotter fire than that for those who don't do their duty."

But in a moment the case seemed desperate even to Farragut's courageous soul, for he raised his hands above his head and exclaimed, "My God, is it to end in this way?" Just then Master's Mate Allen, in charge of the ship's fire-brigade, climbed into the mizzen rigging with the nozzle of a hose in his hand, and a moment later the spurting water of the hose had drowned the soaring flames.

Meantime the tug *Mosher* had held the raft faithfully against the *Hartford*, although under the very muzzles of the ship's big guns and in the brilliant light of the blazing fire. But a half dozen shells were fired at her, and drifting away, she sank in the black water, carrying down every one of the heroic men upon her.

And that was not the last case where men were found to face certain death in this fashion.

The accounts of what was done by other vessels of the fleets are as confused as were their movements as seen by the various spectators. It appears, however, that while the last division of the squadron struggled through the pass in the barrier the *Cayuga*, at the head of the first, suddenly found herself among the Confederate gunboats and the guerrillas that were going to show the naval officers how to fight. She had passed, perhaps without seeing her, the dread ironclad *Louisiana*, moored above Fort St. Philip, but the rest of the Confederate ships were lively enough. The guerrillas were lively in their haste to escape, those that had steam up flying for life, and the crews of those without steam setting them on fire and scrambling ashore in haste, while the *Cayuga* fired right and left at everything in sight. The *Moore* was close beside the *Cayuga* on one side, and the *McRae* on the other. Both received a severe pounding as the *Cayuga* passed on. The *Oneida* was not far in the wake, and she, too, gave broadsides to the Confederates. The *Varuna*, swiftest of the government squadron, ran past everything and continued up the river, followed by the Confederate steamer *Moore* with the Union signals aloft. Captain Kennon, seeing that the Con-



Battle of New Orleans.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

federates were being whelmed by the Union forces, determined to escape up the river.

As the *Varuna* and the *Moore* disappeared the *McRae* turned down toward Fort St. Philip. On the way she ran aground, and then the Union steamer *Iroquois* came along. The *McRae* fired a broadside of grape and copper slugs at her, and the *Iroquois* returned it with grape and canister. The slaughter was great on the *McRae*, her commander, Thomas B. Huger, being among the mortally hurt. Huger, but a few months before, had been executive officer of the *Iroquois*, and most of her crew were the men who had served under him. The *McRae* afterward got under Fort St. Philip.

The *Manassas* during this time had not been idle. She had, indeed, plunged into the thick of the Union force. The *Brooklyn*, in coming through the barrier, almost ran down the *Kineo*. The collision changed her course, and a minute later the *Manassas* butted her. Her chain cable saved her from a fatal wound.

As the *Manassas* glanced clear, a man climbed out of her hatch and stood by her smoke-stack a moment to see what damage she had done, and then he suddenly tumbled over into the water and disappeared. An officer of the *Brooklyn* afterwards asked the quartermaster, who was heaving the lead in the chains of the *Brooklyn* on that side, if he

saw the man fall off the *Manassas.* "Why, yes, sir," he replied; "I saw him fall overboard —in fact, I helped him; for I hit him alongside the head with my hand-lead."

As the *Brooklyn* passed on, the *Manassas* turned up-stream after the Union ships, watching for an opportunity to strike. She was seen, and the *Mississippi* and *Kineo* turned back to crush her, but she eluded them and ran ashore. At that her crew fled to the river bank, and the *Mississippi* gave her a broadside that knocked her clear of the mud, and she floated down the river. Opposite Fort St. Philip, Lieutenant Read, of the *McRae*, boarded her. He reported that she was then sound save for a cut pipe, but he must have been mistaken, for when she was passing Porter's mortar flotilla she was seen to be on fire, and she soon "exploded faintly" and sank.

About the time the *Manassas* was abandoned, the *Moore*, under Beverly Kennon, was overtaking the *Varuna* not far from the quarantine station. The *Varuna's* captain was deceived by the *Moore's* false lights. So was one of the Confederate fleet—a swift vessel called the *Jackson.* The *Jackson* fired with her one gun at both steamers, and then fled to New Orleans, where her captain set her afire and abandoned her. Then one of the guerrilla fleet, the *Stonewall Jackson*, came up near the two,

and Kennon, on seeing her, opened fire on the *Varuna*. He expected the *Stonewall Jackson* to come to his help, for the *Moore*, with only two thirty-two-pounders, was no match for the *Varuna*. Nevertheless, Kennon had to fight it out alone until victory was won. He was now close on the *Varuna's* quarter, where her broadside would not bear on him, but because of the height of his own ship's bow he could not bring his gun to bear, so he depressed the muzzle of his gun and shot a hole through his own bow to make way for shot to be aimed at the *Varuna*. The next shot from the *Moore* raked the *Varuna*, and to bring his broadside to bear, Captain Boggs, of the *Varuna*, put her helm over, and turned her across the course of the *Moore*. And that was a fatal error, for Kennon, instead of turning away, turned toward the *Varuna* and drove the sharp bow of the *Moore*, crashing through her side. The *Varuna* got in a raking broadside that was very destructive, but was herself cut through. The *Moore* hauled off and kept on up-stream, and then came the *Stonewall Jackson* and rammed the *Varuna* on the other side. The *Varuna* was then headed to the easterly bank, where she sank, leaving her bow out of water.

But neither the *Moore* nor the *Stonewall Jackson* escaped, for the *Oneida* and *Cayuga* came on and drove them both ashore. The

The Battle of New Orleans.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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Moore was fired, but her crew surrendered when the *Pensacola* came along.

Of the whole Confederate squadron only the *Louisiana*, the *McRae*, and the guerrilla *Defiance* remained, and they were under the guns of Fort St. Philip. The *Defiance* had been abandoned, but men from the *McRae* took possession of her. The *Louisiana*, even as a

Confederate Ironclad Ram *Stonewall Jackson.*

From a photograph.

floating battery, did nothing but fire a broadside or two at the passing squadron.

The river was clear, save for two batteries of no account, as far as New Orleans, and at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, on April 25, 1862, the triumphant government squadron was before the Crescent City. It had lost only thirty-five killed and 128 wounded.

But two or three incidents of the occupation

of the city need be mentioned. Captain Bailey and Lieut. George H. Perkins were sent ashore to demand that the mayor haul down the Confederate flags. A howling mob surrounded and insulted and even threw filth upon the two lone officers, who were simply obeying orders. The letter of Farragut was delivered to Mayor Monroe in the presence of Pierre Soulé, who had been a senator and a minister to Spain. Primed by Soulé, the mayor wrote a letter filled with such expressions as "you have a gallant people to administer"; "sensitive to all that can affect its dignity and self-respect"; "order and peace may be preserved without resort to measures which could not fail to wound their susceptibilities and fire up their passions"; "you may trust their honor, though you might not count on their submission to unmerited wrong." As to the Confederate flags, "nor could I find in my entire constituency so wretched and desperate a renegade as would dare to profane with his hand the sacred emblem of our aspirations."

The flags came down, however, and the old flag was raised over the Mint. A gambler named Mumford, with three associates, hauled it down, dragged it in the streets, and tore it to pieces. It was a wild town until May 1st, and even for a few days later; but on May 1st came Benjamin F. Butler with his troops

from the transports that had accompanied the Union warships, and Butler was the man for the place. If any reader wants to learn how to tame a mob with superabundant "sensibilities" and "passions" and "aspirations" and "honor" mixed in the jumble exhibited by Pierre Soulé and Mayor Monroe, let him read "Butler's Book."

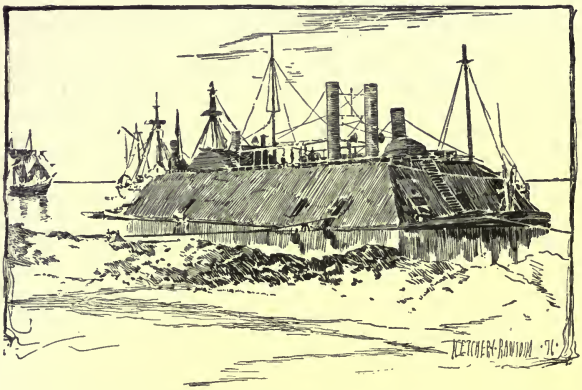
To return to Forts St. Philip and Jackson, it must be said that with the government forces above and below them, they were in such a desperate strait that when Porter threatened to renew the bombardment, more than half the garrison mutinied. Most of them were foreigners, anyway. The forts were surrendered to Porter on April 28, 1862. While Porter was opposite Fort Jackson negotiating for the surrender, under a flag of truce hoisted on the fort and on his flagship, Commander John K. Mitchell, of the ironclad *Louisiana*, set her on fire, and she came drifting down upon the Union squadron lying under the flag of truce. Fortunately, she blew up just before she arrived where she could do any damage. Some Confederate writers like Scharf assert that Mitchell had a perfect right to destroy her, because she was not included in the surrender. This is correct. But when they say Mitchell "took caution that no injury should fall to the enemy's fleet while under the flag of truce,"

they assert somewhat more than the facts warrant, for Mitchell left the ship moored by ropes that he knew would burn off before the fire reached the magazine, and they admit that he did not draw the charges from her heavy guns. They say that he tried to "drown the magazine" and failed, and that he then sent an officer to warn Porter. The officer was sent, but he was sent so long after the fire was started that she blew up before he reached Porter's ship. Moreover, before the passing of the fleet the *Louisiana* was moored far up the stream, against the protest of the military authorities, instead of down below, where she could have driven off Porter's mortars. The Confederate heroes of the fight were Sherman, Kennon, and Huger. Every American thinks of their bravery and skill with pleasure, but Mitchell was another kind of a man.

The capture of New Orleans was of the greatest moment, as the reader will remember. Baton Rouge and Natchez surrendered to Captain Craven, of the *Brooklyn*, a few days later. Pensacola was evacuated, and the Union forces took possession on May 10th. And because of these gains the French Emperor, who was looking on Texas as well as on Mexico as a good prize, was led to change his mind.

It was Porter's belief that had Farragut

been sent to Mobile immediately, it would have fallen with small resistance, if any, and the great battle later on would have been saved. But the Administration wanted the Mississippi opened immediately, and Farragut went up to try it. He succeeded in passing all the fortifications, including those at Vicks-



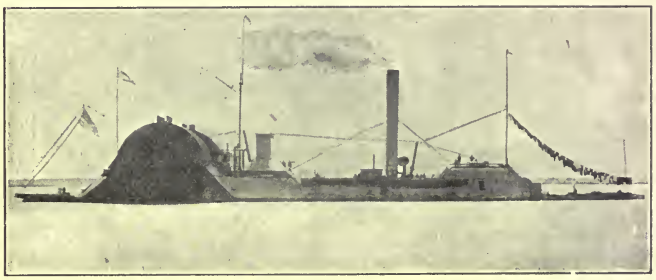
The *Essex* after Running the Batteries at Vicksburg and Port Hudson.

After a photograph.

burg, where he met Flag Officer Davis. But at Vicksburg the forts were from 150 to 264 feet above the water, and the ships of that day could not successfully attack such works. And even had Farragut captured the forts, there were not enough soldiers at hand to hold the town.

In fact, Farragut's bold cruise up the river was practically fruitless because the Administra-

tion did not follow it up. This is not said to criticise the Administration. It is the common belief of the American people that no man in the nation could have done better than Abraham Lincoln. But after the batteries were passed at Vicksburg, the Union forces made what Mahan calls a recoil. Vicksburg was more strongly fortified than ever, and so was Port Hudson, while Grand Gulf became



The *Carondelet* after Passing Vicksburg.

From a photograph.

a point of no small importance to the Confederates.

While the combined squadrons of Farragut and Davis lay above Vicksburg a Confederate ram called the *Arkansas*, Capt. Isaac N. Brown, was reported as about ready for action at a shipyard up the Yazoo River. "Little apprehension was felt in the Union fleet," but Captain Walke, with the *Carondelet*, the *Taylor*, and Ellet's ram, *Queen of the West*, went up for

a look at her on July 15, 1862. Very unexpectedly they met her coming down for a look at the Union forces. The *Taylor* was in the lead, and she immediately turned back for the support of the *Carondelet.* The *Carondelet* turned back for the support of the ram, and the ram turned back for the support of the squadron in the Mississippi. Being very swift, the ram ran soon out of sight. The gunboats now had their unarmored sterns toward the Confederate ship, and for an hour she spanked them soundly, as they richly deserved. The *Carondelet* at this time actually threw 150 pounds of metal from rifled guns in her bow ports to the 106 that the *Arkansas* threw from her bow ports, while her broadside fire was 170 pounds to 165 on the *Arkansas.* And yet, although supposably supported by the *Taylor*, she ran away, hugging the left bank, where the *Arkansas*, of thirteen feet draft, could not ram her, and there she eventually grounded, leaving the triumphant *Arkansas* to chase the *Taylor* and surprise the government squadrons.

Fortunate it was that the Confederates at the Yazoo shipyards were poor mechanics. When the *Arkansas* reached the Union squadrons her machinery was in such bad order that she was making barely one knot an hour. The captured ram *General Bragg* had steam up, but her captain waited for orders, and so missed

the chance of a lifetime, as Farragut remarked at the time.

Boldly steering through the unprepared squadron, the *Arkansas* fired right and left and took a position under the Vicksburg batteries. Her crew numbered forty-one. The two Union flag officers were greatly mortified because they were caught napping, and Farragut, to retrieve himself, took his squadron down past the batteries that night, hoping to destroy the *Arkansas* as he passed, but he failed because she was safely moored. Two days later Farragut and part of his ships went to New Orleans, and the handful of Union troops that had been on the point opposite Vicksburg went to Baton Rouge.

On October 5th Breckenridge attacked the Union forces at Baton Rouge, and the *Arkansas* went there to help. The Union ironclad *Essex*, Capt. William Porter, with four other gunboats, were below Vicksburg at the time, three of the others being of Farragut's fleet. The *Katahdin* and *Kineo* were able to give the Union army a good support in a fight against superior numbers. The *Arkansas*, while trying to come to the aid of Breckenridge, broke down and ran ashore. While she lay in the mud the *Essex* came up looking for her, and as she could not be moved her crew set her on fire and escaped. She was of the

Queen of the West. *Taylor.* *Carondelet.* *Arkansas.*

Battle between the *Carondelet* and the *Arkansas.*

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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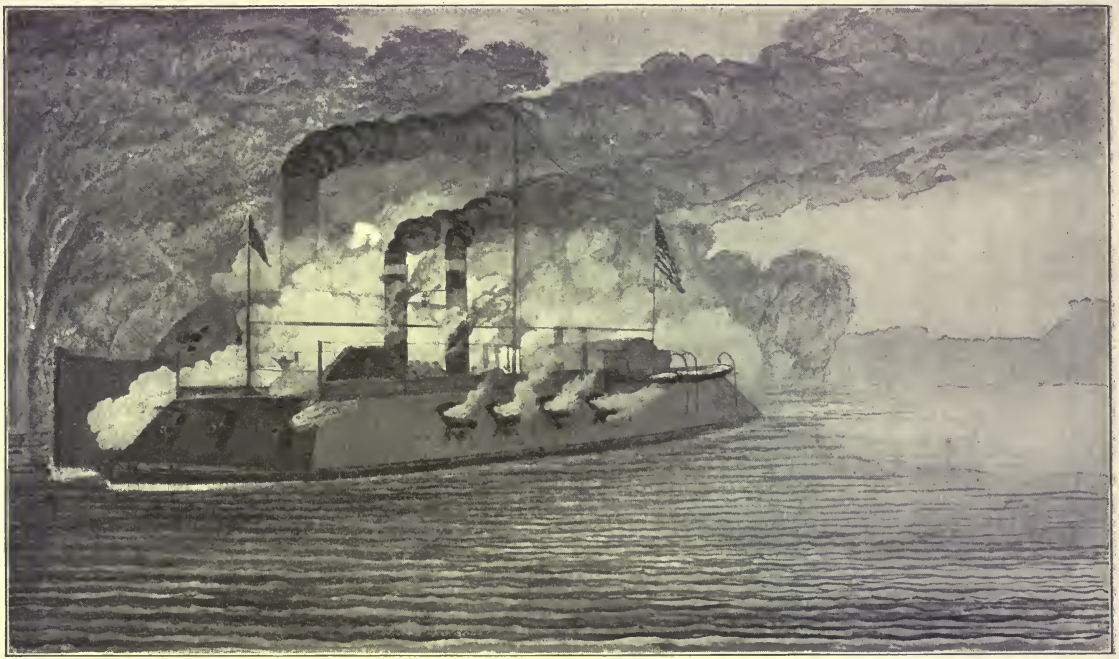

Arkansas. *Carondelet.*

Battle between the *Arkansas* and the *Carondelet.*

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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usual form of the river ironclads, and was armored with railroad iron. The design and the material were good for that day, but she was doomed to defeat by her builders before she was launched.

On October 1, 1862, the Mississippi squadron was transferred to the Navy Department,

Destruction of the *Arkansas* near Baton Rouge, August 4, 1862.
From a lithograph published by Currier & Ives.

and David D. Porter was promoted and placed in charge. A lot of light-draft steamers clad with half-inch or better iron were added to the squadron and were armed with howitzers. They were called tin-clads, and were of service in carrying transports, and for light work generally.

Another addition to the squadron was a class of heavy boats with their wheels well

aft and rectangular casemates forward. They carried some eleven-inch Dahlgrens, and were plated with two and three-inch iron, one carrying as much as six inches on the casemate. But they were built in actual war-time, so the builders took advantage of the haste to rob the nation by scamping the work, and the engines were constantly breaking down.

David D. Porter.
From a photograph.

In November the first of a series of moves against Vicksburg was made by the way of the Yazoo River country. The swamps of the Yazoo had served to keep the Federal forces from turning the north end of the Confederate defences along the Vicksburg side of the river, and an expedition was sent across through the bayous, leaving the Mississippi near Helena, and entering the head-waters of the Yazoo. It failed utterly, and the gunboat *Cairo* was destroyed by torpedoes made of whiskey demijohns.

Then, in January, 1863, a naval force was

sent to help the army capture Arkansas Post, fifty miles up the Arkansas River. The *De Kalb* (former *St. Louis*), the *Louisville*, and the *Cincinnati*, and all the tin-clads were in the expedition, and on January 9th and 10th they shot the forts to pieces, and disabled all the guns, seventeen in number, including two nine-inch Dahlgrens that had come all the way from the Norfolk Navy Yard. The white flag was raised before the army could make an assault.

General Grant arrived opposite Vicksburg on January 30, 1863, and the plan of attacking Vicksburg by turning the river line on the south was adopted, and that succeeded some months later. Meantime Porter, to control the river between Vicksburg and Port Hudson, sent Col. Charles R. Ellet, with his ram, *Queen of the West*, down past the Vicksburg batteries. Owing to trouble with her steering gear, she did not get off till daylight on February 2d; but the Ellets were the most recklessly brave family known to the Mississippi. The colonel started in the face of fire, rammed and set fire to a Confederate steamer at the Vicksburg wharf, and passed on without losing a man.

A small ferryboat, called the *De Soto*, was added to Ellet's command when below Vicksburg, and then Porter sent down the *Indianola*, one of the newest armored boats. That seemed to give the Union forces full sway as

far as Port Hudson; but within a week Ellet attacked a fort near Gordon's Landing, on the Red River, got his ship aground, and had to abandon her. He retreated in the *De Soto* until a prize they had captured was reached, when the *De Soto* was burned, and in the prize (a steamer called the *Era*) they reached the *Indianola.* But the Confederates were still after them, using the abandoned *Queen of the West* and one of the original Confederate rams, called the *Webb*, with a couple of ordinary river steamers, the whole fleet being protected with cotton. The *Indianola* tried to escape up the river, but the rams being swifter, chose their own time, and rammed her to death on the night of the 24th. The Confederates once more held the river.

A curious thing then happened. The *Indianola* was sunk on the easterly bank, not far below Vicksburg. A Confederate force set to work to raise and repair her. They were getting on well, when, early on the morning of the 26th, a Federal gunboat was reported coming down the river. There was a most furious cannonading at the Vicksburg batteries, and the four steamers that had so gallantly captured the *Indianola* at once fled militia-fashion. A lieutenant with a hundred men was left on the wreck (she was awash and near shore); but when he saw what a fearsome

Admiral Farragut Passing Port Hudson.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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The U. S. Flotilla Passing the Vicksburg Batteries.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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aspect the coming monster had, he set the *Indianola's* two big guns muzzle to muzzle, fired them to destroy them, and then fled. The story of these doings made the government forces laugh and the Confederates curse for many a day after that, for the so-called gunboat was a dummy in the form of a monitor, sent adrift for a lark by Porter's men.

On the whole, however, the Confederates were plainly having the best of the contest, and Farragut came up from the Gulf to see about matters. He had himself had both good and bad fortune in the Gulf. A number of Texas ports, including Galveston and Corpus Christi, were captured, but Galveston was retaken by the Confederates, who attacked it with a combined land and marine force, the ships being cotton-clads. The Union navy had the *Westfield* destroyed, and the *Harriet Lane* captured, after both her captain and executive officer were killed. And a little later the famous *Alabama* appeared at night off Galveston. An armed merchant steamer was sent to inspect her, and the *Alabama* opened fire and sank her, escaping before the other blockading steamer could come out to assist.

So Farragut was in a state of mind to take risks, and he ran his squadron past the works at Port Hudson on the 14th of March, 1863, where nineteen heavy guns were mounted. It

was a dangerous place naturally on account of the currents in the stream and the shoals. Seven vessels, including the *Hartford*, tried the passage. The *Hartford*, with the gunboat *Albatross* alongside, led the procession. The *Monongahela*, with the *Kineo* alongside, were next, with the *Richmond* and *Genesee* following, and the *Mississippi* alone in the rear.

The *Hartford* with her consort got past the batteries after some little trouble. The *Richmond* was disabled by a shot, and with her consort's aid turned back. The *Monongahela* and consort both grounded, but the *Monongahela* passed on, while the *Mississippi* grounded so hard that she was fired and abandoned. It was a pretty serious affair for the government force, but the Red River was blockaded, and it was not opened for traffic until the end of the war. When two of the Ellet rams were sent down past Vicksburg to increase Farragut's force above Port Hudson, one, the *Lancaster*, was sunk, and the other got through. Both were commanded by the indomitable Ellet boys.

Near the end of February, while Farragut held the river between Port Hudson and Vicksburg, Porter tried to get in behind Vicksburg by the way of the Yazoo swamps once more. He took a different route from that of the first expedition, but he could not drive the tin-clads

Confederate Forts. *Benton.* *Tuscumbia.* *Pittsburg.* *Louisville.* *Carondelet.* *Lafayette.* *St. Louis.*

Battle of Grand Gulf—First Position.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

over the willows, and the Confederates cut trees across the bayous both in front of and behind his steamers until he was well-nigh lost. And at the last he found his way blocked by the hulk of the *Star of the West*, the steamer at which the first shot of the war was fired—the shot that turned her back when she was carrying supplies to Fort Sumter. After the Sumter event she had gone to New Orleans, was there taken forcibly by the Confederates, and ended her existence as a barrier hulk in a Yazoo bayou.

This expedition having failed, Grant determined to go down the westerly bank of the Mississippi to New Carthage, and then cross and surround Vicksburg. On the night of April 16, 1863, Porter took the following vessels down past Vicksburg to cover Grant when crossing: The flagship *Benton*, sixteen guns, Lieut.-commander James A. Greer, leading, and the other vessels in the following order: *Lafayette*, eight guns, Capt. Henry Walke; *Louisville*, twelve guns, Lieut.-commander Elias K. Owen; *Mound City*, fourteen guns, Lieut. Byron Wilson; *Pittsburg*, thirteen guns, Lieut. W. R. Hoel; *Carondelet*, eleven guns, Lieut. J. McLeod Murphy; *Tuscumbia*, five guns, Lieut.-commander James W. Shirk. The *Lafayette* carried with her, lashed to the other side of her coal barge, the ram *General*

Price, Lieut. S. E. Woodworth, which had continued in the service after being taken from the Confederates at Memphis. After the *Carondelet*, between her and the *Tuscumbia*, came three army transports, the *Silver Wave*, *Henry Clay*, and *Forest Queen*, unprotected except by bales of hay and cotton round the boilers. They carried stores, but no troops.

The armed vessels were repeatedly hulled, but were in no way disabled. One transport, the *Henry Clay*, caught fire and sank. On the 22d of April a number of transports ran the batteries, and on the 29th, the plans having been changed somewhat, the squadron attacked the works at Grand Gulf. Here there were four of the best rifled cannon of the day, two eight-inch smooth-bores, two old thirty-twos, and some light guns—a battery of not a fourth of the power of the fleet, but it was seventy-five feet above the water, and the fleet pounded it all day and accomplished nothing. They lost eighteen killed and fifty-six wounded at that.

However, the work of carrying the army across the river at Bruinsburg, below Grand Gulf, began next day. This was on April 30th. On that day the gunboats left above Vicksburg made such a determined attack on the works there that no reinforcements were sent down to Grand Gulf. Having carried the

Battle of Grand Gulf—Second Position.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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Battle of Grand Gulf—Third Position.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

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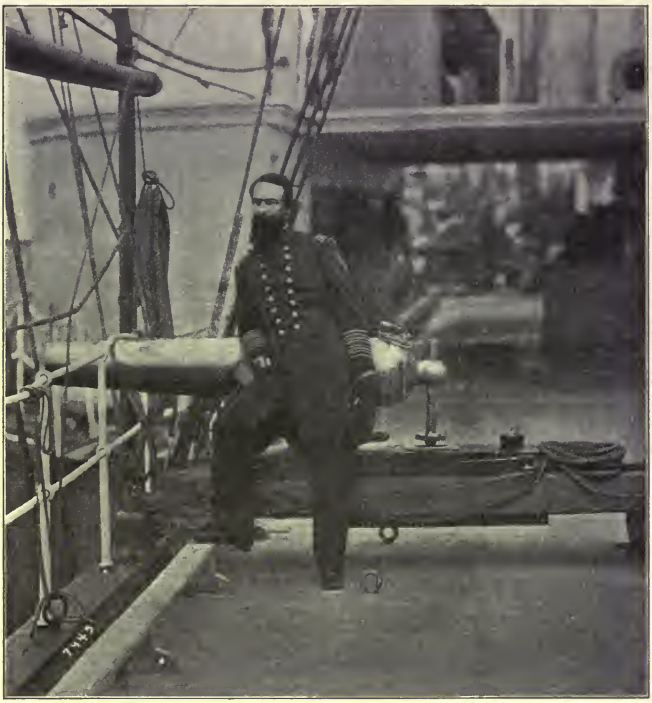
Union army over at Bruinsburg, Porter, on May 3d, attacked the works at Grand Gulf and found them evacuated. Then Grant made Grand Gulf his base of supplies, and the surrounding of Vicksburg was accomplished by May 21, 1863. From that time on a steady advance was made by the army, and the flotilla supported every movement by shelling the river batteries. There was no great conflict on the part of the navy, but the help of the ships in keeping open the water route for supplies and in covering the movements of the army was fully appreciated by General Grant and by the whole nation. The writer hereof, who was a lad in the backwoods of Ohio at the time, remembers that when, on the afternoon of the 4th day of July, the people of the village where he lived, half crazy with joy over the news, were piling up dry rails fifty feet high for a bonfire to celebrate the fall of Vicksburg, the name of Porter was frequently mentioned by the shouting crowd, with that of Grant, although the people there didn't know a warship from a coal barge.

Meantime, while Grant was before Vicksburg the French troops were in Mexico, and on June 10, 1863, they entered Mexico City, the capital. The French Emperor, Napoleon III, had shown an unfriendly disposition toward the United States, and, as already intimated,

had been trying, through his diplomatic agents, to get Texas to secede from the Confederacy and establish an independent govern-



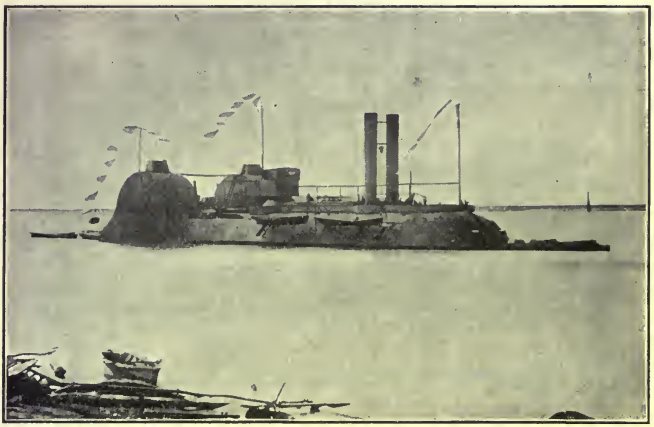
Admiral Porter on Deck of Flagship at Grand Écore, La.

From a photograph.

ment. The operations of the French led the Administration at Washington to send General Banks on an expedition that had Shreveport, on the Red River, near the boundary between Louisiana and Texas, and about 400 miles from

the Mississippi River, for its destination. It may be briefly said that the expedition won some battles and accomplished nothing. Admiral Porter, with the following vessels, accompanied the expedition :

Essex, Commander Robert Townsend; *Eastport*, Lieut.-commander S. L. Phelps; *Black*



U. S. Ram *Lafayette.*

From a photograph.

Hawk, Lieut.-commander K. R. Breese; *Lafayette*, Lieut.-commander J. P. Foster; *Benton*, Lieut.-commander J. A. Greer; *Louisville*, Lieut.-commander E. K. Owen; *Carondelet*, Lieut.-commander J. G. Mitchell; *Osage*, Lieut.-commander T. O. Selfredge; *Ouachita*, Lieut.-commander Byron Wilson; *Lexington*, Lieut. G. M. Bache; *Chillicothe*, Lieut. S. P.

Couthouy; *Pittsburg*, Lieut. W. R. Hoel; *Mound City*, Lieut. A. R. Langthorne; *Neosho*, Lieut. Samuel Howard; *Ozark*, Lieut. G. W. Browne; *Fort Hindman*, Lieut. John Pearce;

U. S. Gunboat *Fort Hindman*.

From a photograph.

Cricket, Master H. H. Gorringe; *Gazelle*, Master Charles Thatcher.

It was on March 12, 1863, that Porter's command started up Red River. The advanced vessels of the fleet reached Alexandria on the 15th, and all the fleet was there on the 16th.

It was an easy voyage so far, but above Alexandria were (and are) two rapids not to be passed during low water, and in the spring of 1863 the water was exceptionally low.

However, the *Eastport*, *Mound City*, *Carondelet*, *Pittsburg*, *Louisville*, *Chillicothe*, *Ozark*, *Neosho*, *Lexington*, and *Hindman* were dragged over with some thirty transports. These went up the river and rendered considerable aid to the army, but the real interest in the expedition lies in the backwoods scheme by which the whole squadron above the falls was saved from destruction.

Joseph Bailey.

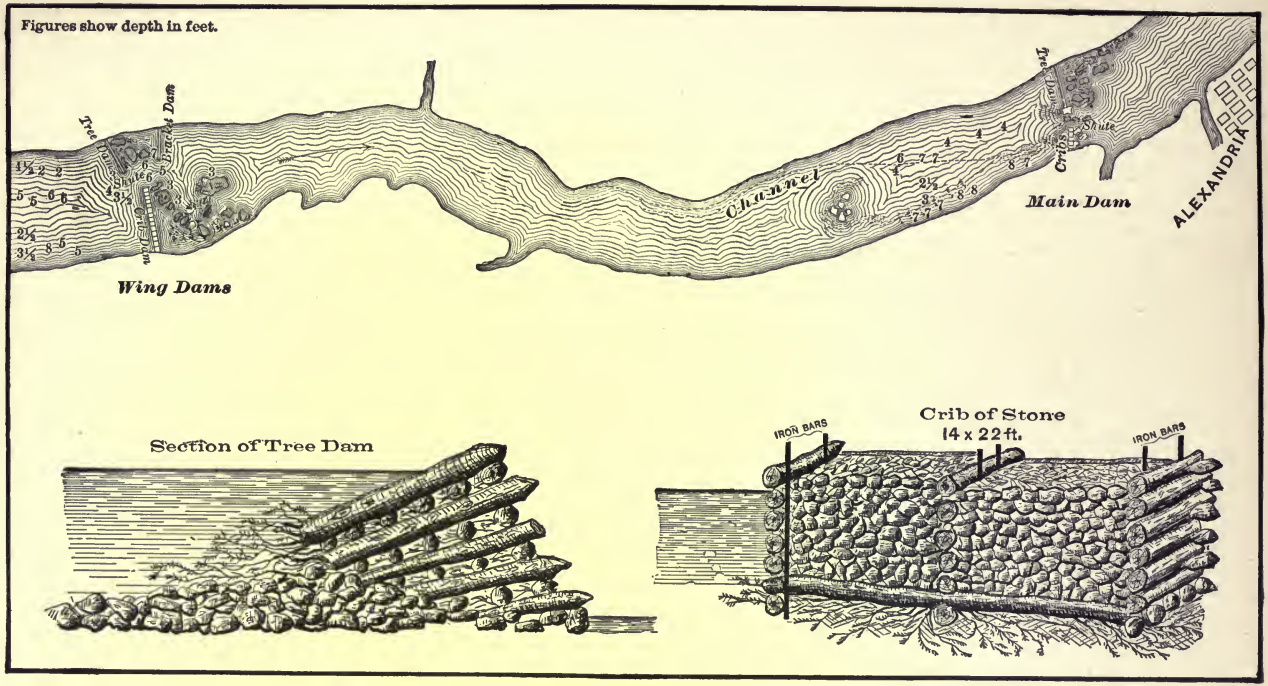
From a photograph.

Instead of finding high water at the season when it was naturally expected, the river fell, and ten gunboats and two tugs were left helpless above the falls. Nevertheless, help came when Lieut.-col. Joseph Bailey, of the Fourth Wisconsin Volunteers, saw the situation. Bailey was a log-driver, and knew how to lift a jam over any kind of rifts or obstructions. Nearly everybody who heard of his plan, doubted and many jeered at the idea; "but Bailey had the

faith that moves mountains." Moreover, there were right at hand two regiments of men from Maine—nearly 2,000 men, of whom Jeremiah O'Brien, who captured the *Margaretta*, would have been proud.

The rifts were a mile long, and at a point below them the high banks were 758 feet apart. The water between the high banks was deep enough to float any gunboat, but not too deep for building a dam. Bailey said he would build a dam there that would flood the rifts to navigating depth, and he did it. The men from Maine swung their axes in the forest near by, and the teamsters hauled the cut trees, branches and all, and dumped them into the water. Here other Maine men piled the trees up with their butts down-stream, cross-tied with logs and their branches interlacing above. Similar dams can be seen in any of the logging regions of the United States in these days. This dam extended from the north bank, a little more than half-way across the stream. From the south bank, for lack of trees, a crib dam—cribs of logs filled with stone —was built. When the opening between the ends of these dams was small enough—when it was but 150 feet wide—it was filled with four coal barges that were loaded with brick and sunk there.

Astonishing as it seems to one who has



Red River Dam.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

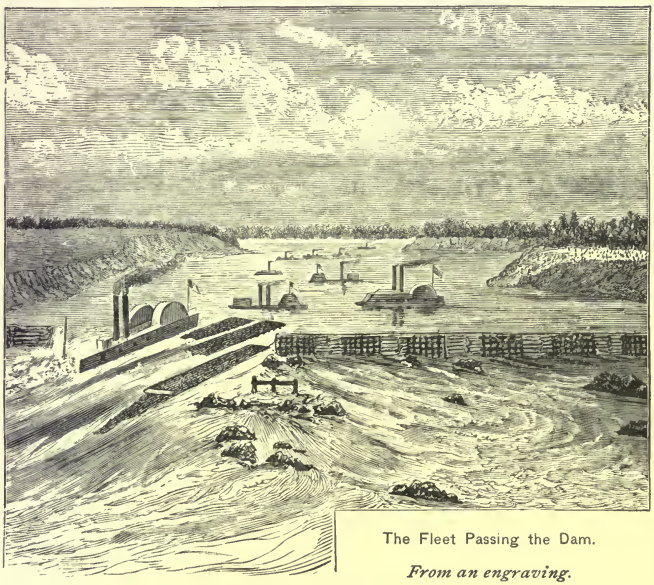
seen such dams built, Bailey and his men from Maine had completed the dam in eight days, deepening the water on the rifts by more than six feet—the water was deep enough on the rifts for the *Osage*, the *Neosho*, and *Hindman* to pass down and anchor in the still water between the foot of the rifts and the dam.

But just as this success had been attained two of the sunken coal barges in the centre of the dam were shoved out of line by the weight of water, and in an instant the backwater above the dam began to pour through the opening in a mighty torrent.

At that moment the gunboat *Lexington*, with steam up, was at the head of the rifts, ready to follow the gunboats that had passed down to safety, while Admiral Porter stood on the bank, overseeing the operation. One glance at the broken dam showed that the level of the water must quickly fall, and Porter shouted to the *Lexington* to go ahead over the rifts and through the break in the dam to the still water below. Instantly her pilot rang the bell to start the engines.

Up to this moment the thousands of soldiers who lined the banks had been shouting and talking to each other, and making a most confused noise; but when the *Lexington* entered the growing current on the rifts a hush fell upon the great throng, until no sound was

heard save the beating of her paddles and the rush of the current as the pilot drove her straight at the opening. There the current took her from his hands, lifted her up on the leaping waves, and, rolling her heavily from side to side, dashed her down into the pool below.



The Fleet Passing the Dam.

From an engraving.

The mighty cheer that the great host of spectators raised seems to echo in the ear to this day as one reads the story of the incident, for the ship was safe.

The *Neosho*, *Hindman*, and *Osage* passed through the dam after the *Lexington*, but there were others still above the rifts, and these

could not pass. But after a while it was found that, even with the break unrepaired, the dam still raised the water more than five feet, and so, instead of repairing the break, Bailey built two wing dams on the rifts above, and these gave the needed depth, and the remainder of the squadron passed down in safety. Bailey received the thanks of Congress, and was made a brigadier-general.

And to conclude the story of the Mississippi squadron, we may quote the words of Mahan in his admirable "Gulf and Inland Waters": "After the Red River expedition little is left to say of the operations of the Mississippi squadron during the rest of the war."

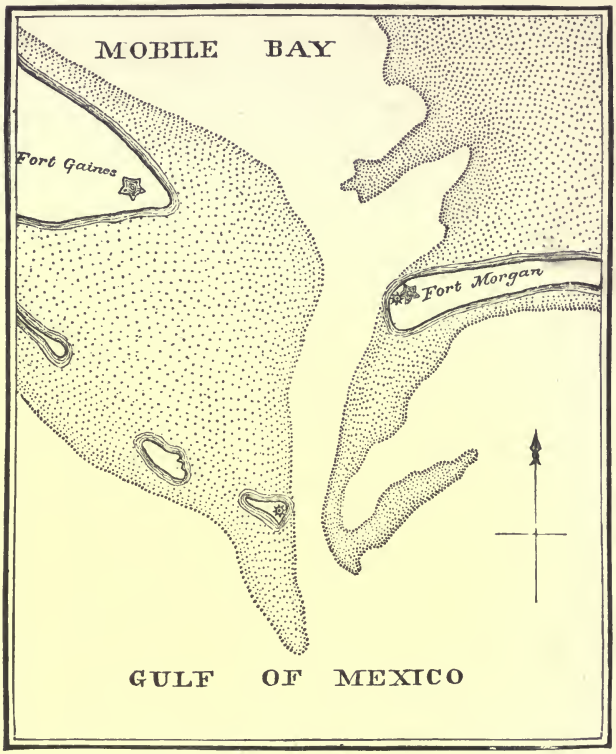
CHAPTER XIII

FARRAGUT AT MOBILE

THE FORTS AND THE CONFEDERATE SQUADRON THE UNION FORCES WERE COMPELLED TO FACE—THE CONFEDERATE IRONCLAD JUST MISSED BEING A MOST FORMIDABLE SHIP—TEDIOUS WAIT FOR MONITORS—WHEN THE SOUTHWEST WIND FAVORED—THERE WAS A FIERCE BLAST FROM THE FORTS AT FIRST, BUT THE TORPEDO WAS WORSE THAN MANY GUNS—FATE OF THE *TECUMSEH* AND CAPTAIN CRAVEN—THE LAST WORDS OF THE MAN FOR WHOM "THERE WAS NO AFTERWARD"—TORPEDOES THAT FAILED BENEATH THE FLAGSHIP—CAPTAIN STEVENS ON THE DECK OF HIS MONITOR—WHEN NEILDS UNFURLED THE OLD FLAG IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM—HOW FARRAGUT WAS LASHED TO THE MAST—JOUETT WOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY A LEADSMAN —MOBBING THE *TENNESSEE*.

MOBILE BAY lies like a great bell open to the south—a bell that is thirty miles long, fifteen wide at the mouth, and six at the head. It is a shoal-water bay, save for a rather deep hole (twenty-one feet) just within; the two sandy islands that stretch out from either side across its mouth almost meet. That is to say, they reach within 2,000 yards of each other, and between them lies the entrance to the channel. In these days a wide ditch carries twenty-three feet of water from the deep

hole inside the islands clear to the town of Mobile ; but at the time of the Civil War that had not been dredged, and the water shelved



Entrance to Mobile Bay.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

gradually from the ripples at the beach to twelve feet at the centre line above the hole. There was a bar outside ; but ships drawing twenty feet of water could pass. The main

point of land at the entrance to Mobile Bay lay on the east, and was called Mobile Point. On the west lay Dauphin Island, and the water between this island and the mainland was and is called Mississippi Sound—a stretch of shoal water that gives inland navigation to New Orleans. The Confederate defences, ashore and afloat in 1864, are described by Mahan as follows:

"The entrance from the Gulf was guarded by two works, Fort Morgan on Mobile Point, and Fort Gaines on Dauphin Island. The approach by Mississippi Sound was covered by Fort Powell, a small earthwork on Tower Island, commanding the channel which gave the most water, known as Grant's Pass. Gaines was too far distant from the main ship channel to count for much in the plans of the fleet. It was a pentagonal work mounting in barbette three X-inch columbiads, five 32-, two 24-, and two 18-pounder smooth-bore guns, and four rifled 32-pounders; besides these it had eleven 24-pounder howitzers for siege and for flank defence. In Fort Powell there were one X-inch, two VIII-inch and one 32-pounder smooth-bore and two VII-inch Brooke rifles; these bore on the sound and channels, but the rear of the fort toward the bay was yet unfinished and nearly unarmed. The third and principal work, Fort Morgan, was much more

formidable. It was five-sided, and built to carry guns both in barbette and casemates; but when seized by the Confederates the embrasures of the curtains facing the channel were masked and a heavy exterior water battery was thrown up before the northwest curtain. The armament at this time cannot be given with absolute certainty. The official reports of the United States engineer and ordnance officers, made after the surrender, differ materially, but from a comparison between them and other statements the following estimate has been made: Main fort, seven X-inch, three VIII-inch and twenty-two 32-pounder smooth-bore guns, and two VIII-inch, two 6.5-inch and four 5.82-inch rifles. In the water battery there were four X-inch and one VIII-inch columbiads and two 6.5-inch rifles. Of the above, ten X-inch, three VIII-inch, sixteen 32-pounders and all the rifles, except one of 5.82 calibre, bore upon the channel.

"In the waters of the bay there was a little Confederate squadron under Admiral Franklin Buchanan, made up of the ram *Tennessee* and three small paddle-wheel gunboats, the *Morgan*, *Gaines*, and *Selma*. They were unarmored, excepting around the boilers. The *Selma* was an open-deck river steamer with heavy hog frames; the two others had been built for the Confederate Government, but

were poorly put together. The batteries were : *Morgan*, two VII-inch rifles and four 32-pounders ; *Gaines*, one VIII-inch rifle and five 32-pounders ; *Selma*, one VI-inch rifle, two IX-inch, and one VIII-inch smooth-bore shell-guns. Though these lightly built vessels played a very important part for some minutes, and from a favorable position did much harm to the Union fleet in the subsequent engagement, they counted for nothing in the calculations of Farragut.

"The *Tennessee* was the most powerful iron-clad built, from the keel up, by the Confederacy, and both the energy showed in overcoming difficulties and the workmanship put upon her were most creditable to her builders. The work was begun at Selma, on the Alabama River, one hundred and fifty miles from Mobile, in the spring of 1863, when the timber was yet standing in the forests, and much of what was to be her plating was still ore in the mines. The hull was launched the following winter and towed to Mobile, where the plating had already been sent from the rolling mills of Atlanta.

"Her length on deck was 209 feet, beam 48 feet, and when loaded, with her guns on board, she drew 14 feet. The battery was carried in a casemate, equidistant from the bow and stern, whose inside dimensions were

79 feet in length by 29 feet in width. The framing was of yellow pine beams, 13 inches thick, placed close together vertically and planked on the outside, first with 5½ inches of yellow pine, laid horizontally, and then 4 inches of oak laid up and down. Both sides and ends were inclined at an angle of forty-five degrees, and over the outside planking was placed the armor, 6 inches thick, in thin plates of 2 inches each, on the forward end, and elsewhere 5 inches thick. Within, the yellow pine frames were sheathed with 2½ inches of oak. The plating throughout was fastened with bolts 1¼ inches in diameter, going entirely through and set up with nuts and washers inside. Her gunners were thus sheltered by a thickness of five or six inches of iron, backed by twenty-five inches of wood. The outside deck was plated with two-inch iron. The sides of the casemate, or, as the Confederates called it, the shield, were carried down to two feet below the water line and then reversed at the same angle, so as to meet the hull again six to seven feet below water. The knuckle thus formed, projecting ten feet beyond the base of the casement, and apparently filled in solid, afforded a substantial protection from an enemy's prow to the hull, which was not less than eight feet within it. It was covered with four inches of iron, and

being continued round the bows, became there a beak or ram. The vessel carried, however, only six guns; one VIII-inch rifle at each end and two VI-inch rifles on each broadside. These were Brooke guns, made in the Confederacy; they threw 110-pound and 90-pound solid shot. The ports were closed with iron sliding shutters, five inches thick; a bad arrangement, as it turned out.

"Though thus powerfully built, armored, and armed, she had two grave defects. Her engines were not built for her, but taken from a high-pressure river steamboat, and though on her trial trip she realized about eight knots, six seems to be all that could usually be got from her. She was driven by a screw, the shaft being connected by gearing with the engines. The other defect was an oversight, her steering chains, instead of being led under her armored deck, were over it, exposed to an enemy's fire. She was therefore a ram that could only by a favorable chance overtake her prey, and was likely at any moment to lose the power of directing her thrust."

While Banks was on the useless Red River expedition Farragut had been anxious to attack Mobile, but had been unable to do so because no troops could be spared for use against the forts and to hold the place when it should be taken. For six months, in fact, the

admiral had to lie idle while the Confederates strengthened their works—even watching them while they brought the *Tennessee* down the river on which she had been built, and then carried her over the shoal waters of the upper part of the bay, just as Perry carried his two brigs out of Erie harbor on Lake Erie when he went out to win his great victory. It was in March, 1864, that the Confederates began this slow task under Farragut's eyes (figuratively speaking; Farragut was not with the fleet constantly), and it was not until May 18th that they had her anchored in the deep water within the forts guarding the channel.

As a matter of fact, Buchanan, the Confederate admiral, intended to go out and attack Farragut's fleet that night, as the *Merrimac* had attacked the wooden fleet in Hampton Roads. What he would have accomplished may not now be guessed; but Farragut had wooden ships only to meet the *Tennessee*, although he had done everything he could to get ironclads. However, the *Tennessee* grounded, and when she was floated Buchanan, for some reason unknown, changed his mind.

Meantime the Confederate had anchored forty-six beer-keg torpedoes and 134 torpedoes made of tin, all fitted with percussion fuses, across the channel, leaving a pass, marked by a red buoy, near Fort Morgan (on the east

side) for the blockade-runners. The pass was about 100 yards wide and at the most deadly range from the fort.

After six months of tedious delay four monitors came with the assurance that a sufficient number of troops would coöperate. Two of these monitors had single turrets, armored with ten inches of iron and carrying two fifteen-inch Dahlgren guns—guns that used sixty pounds of powder (and might have used a hundred) behind solid-steel shot weighing 440 pounds. The others had eleven-inch Dahlgrens.

Eventually a day for landing the troops on Dauphin Island was fixed—August 4, 1864—and Farragut was to pass the forts and anchor in the bay before daylight. The troops were landed, but Farragut had to wait for some of his squadron that had failed to arrive. But during the day they were all there. The wooden ships were prepared much as they had been at the battle of New Orleans, and then all that was wanting was a flood-tide to help sweep the ships, and a southwest wind to blow the smoke of battle into the eyes of Fort Morgan's gunners. As fortune turned, Farragut got both early on the morning of August 5, 1864. It had been raining the night before, and it is recorded that Farragut could not sleep well. At 3 o'clock in the morning he sent a man on

deck to ask how the wind was, and the man brought word that it was southwest.

"Then we will go in this morning," said Farragut, and a few minutes later the boatswains were turning out all hands on every ship of the fighting squadron. It was not a long task to get the men to quarters, but the ships had to be lashed together two and two, —the little *Octorara* on the off side of the *Brooklyn*, and the little *Metacomet* on the off side of the flagship *Hartford*, and so on, to protect the little ones from the fire of Fort Morgan.

When this was done the line was formed in two columns, the monitors on the right, next to the fort, in the following order of battle:

Monitors — starboard column: *Tecumseh*, 1,034 tons, two guns, Commander T. A. M. Craven; *Manhattan*, 1,034 tons, two guns, Commander J. W. A. Nicholson; *Winnebago*, 970 tons, four guns, Commander Thomas H. Stevens; *Chickasaw*, 970 tons, four guns, Lieut.-commander George H. Perkins.

Wooden ships — port column: *Brooklyn*, twenty-four guns, Capt. James Alden; *Octorara*, six guns, Lieut.-commander Charles H. Greene; *Hartford*, twenty-one guns, Rear-admiral David G. Farragut, Capt. Percival Drayton; *Metacomet*, six guns, Lieut.-commander James E. Jouett; *Richmond*, twenty guns, Capt.

Farragut and Drayton on Board the *Hartford* at Mobile Bay.

Drawn by I. W. Taber from a photograph.

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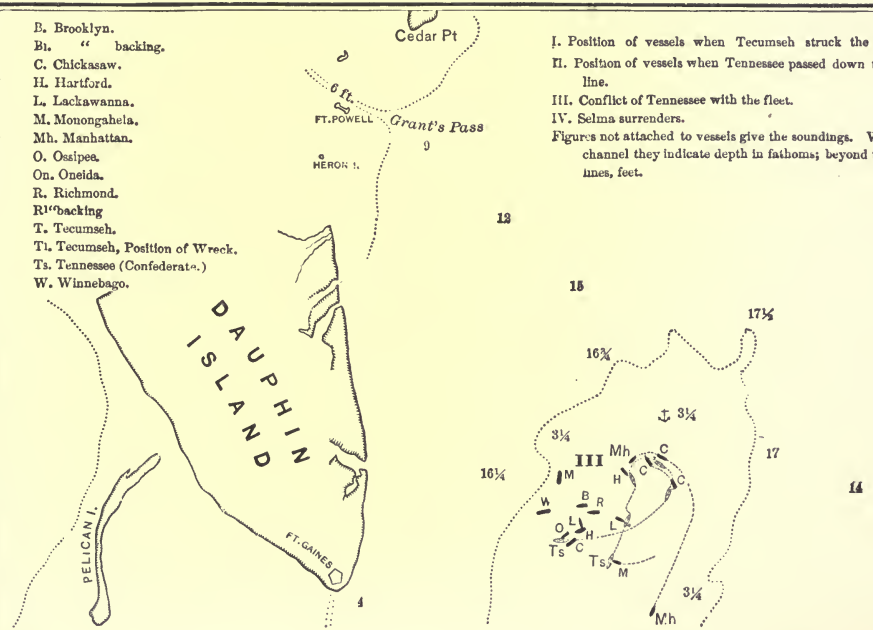
Thornton A. Jenkins; *Port Royal*, six guns, Commander Bancroft Gherardi; *Lackawanna*, eight guns, Capt. John B. Marchand; *Seminole*, eight guns, Commander Edward Donaldson; *Monongahela*, eight guns, Commander James H. Strong; *Kennebec*, five guns, Lieut.-commander William P. McCann; *Ossipee*, eleven guns, Commander William E. Le Roy; *Itasca*, five guns, Lieut.-commander George Brown; *Oneida*, nine guns, Commander J. R. M. Mullany; *Galena*, ten guns, Lieut.-commander Clark H. Wells. The *Octorara*, *Metacomet*, and *Port Royal* were side-wheel double-enders; the others were screw ships. All had been built for the naval service.

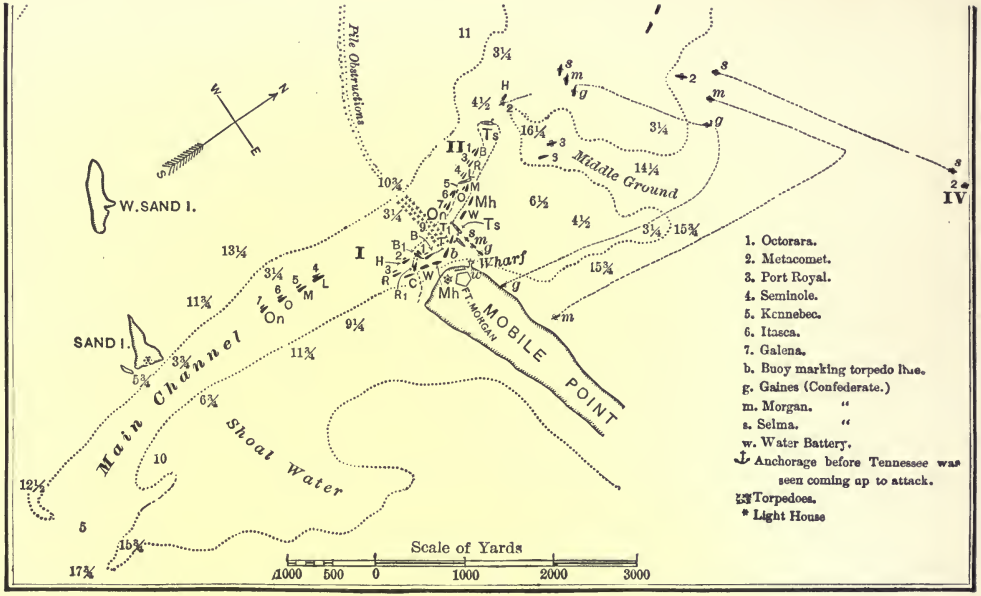
The signal to move rose to the *Hartford's* masthead at 5.30 o'clock, and by 6.10 the leaders were crossing the bar, heading for the narrow passway marked by the red buoy just under the heaviest guns of Fort Morgan.

"It was a glorious sight to see those brave fellows wearing a smile of joy upon their faces in view of such odds against them, and not knowing how soon they and their comrades would be lying at the bottom of the bay. All could not hope to escape this trying ordeal, when several of the coolest officers calculated that at least six of the ships would be blown up. They never stopped to consider whose fate this would be; all they desired was to

B. Brooklyn.
Bl. " backing.
C. Chickasaw.
H. Hartford.
L. Lackawanna.
M. Monongahela.
Mh. Manhattan.
O. Ossipee.
On. Oneida.
R. Richmond.
Rl" backing
T. Tecumseh.
Tl. Tecumseh, Position of Wreck.
Ts. Tennessee (Confederate.)
W. Winnebago.

I. Position of vessels when Tecumseh struck the Torpedo.
II. Position of vessels when Tennessee passed down the Union line.
III. Conflict of Tennessee with the fleet.
IV. Selma surrenders.
Figures not attached to vessels give the soundings. Within the channel they indicate depth in fathoms; beyond the dotted lines, feet.





Battle of Mobile Bay.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

grapple with the enemy, and see the Union flag floating over the forts that had been taken from their lawful owners."

Slowly—too slowly, the squadron steamed in, the American flag fluttering at every peak until within easy range, when the *Tecumseh*, the leading monitor, hurled two fifteen-inch shot at the fort. There was no reply, and the squadron continued slowly on with the monitors blazing away.

The silence of the fort was ominous, for its garrison were waiting for the shortest range; but at 7.7 o'clock, as the head of the squadron drew in to make the turn at the red buoy, the time had come, and a roaring blast of iron hail struck the leading ships. But ominous as the silence of the fort had seemed, the result of their best aim was insignificant, for only one shot did any damage worth mention, and that one killed nearly all of a gun's crew on the *Hartford.*

All the guns of the fleet that would bear were now opened on the fort, grape and canister being chiefly used in order to drive the men from the guns, and so steady was the rain of the small projectiles through the fort's portholes that the fire there was instantly slackened.

And then came the Confederate squadron from behind the fort to take a position above

the line of torpedoes to help repel the fleet. As the *Tennessee* opened fire the monitor *Tecumseh*, at the head of the Union line, had her turret turned with portholes from the fort while the guns were loaded. Captain Craven, intent on reaching the *Tennessee* as quickly as possible, saw that if he had to pass between the red buoy and the fort, his route would be a crooked one, and turning to the pilot at his side in the pilot-house, he said:

T. A. M. Craven.

From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall.

"It is impossible that the Admiral means us to go inside the buoy; I cannot turn my ship." He knew that outside the red buoy lay the torpedoes, but saying "starboard" to the man at the wheel, he headed the *Tecumseh* straight for the Confederate ram. For a few minutes she held her course undisturbed, but as the red buoy

was brought abeam, her bow was suddenly lifted out of water, she lurched heavily from side to side, and then down she went bow first, her screw lifted up to view, and with a minute or two of time between the shock and the sinking. A torpedo had ripped open her hull. A few men in the turret climbed out. Craven and Pilot John Collins both started for the opening in the pilot-house, and then Craven drew back and said :

"After you, pilot." But there was no afterward for Tunis Augustus Craven. There was a chance for one, but not for two. "When I reached the uppermost round of the ladder," said Collins, "the ship dropped from under me." In all, ninety-two good men went down with their immortal captain.

Farragut, who had climbed into the port main rigging of the *Hartford*, where he could see over the smoke of battle, saw the *Tecumseh* sink, and turning to Capt. J. Jouett, of the little *Metacomet* alongside, asked him to send a boat to rescue some of the *Tecumseh's* crew. But Jouett had already ordered the boat away, and it carried another hero of that battle—Ensign H. C. Neilds. Neilds was only a lad, but he sat unmoved in the stern of the frail craft as it passed out from the shelter of his ship into the hurtling storm that ripped the water into a misty spray. A moment later he

remembered that his flag was not flying, and standing up, as a Perry might have done, he unfurled the flag, set it to its staff in the face of friend and foe, and then sat down quietly to guide the boat on her mission.

Over on the monitors was still another hero —Commander Stevens, of the *Winnebago.* He was of the old school of seamen, who believed that the captain's place was on the quarter-deck. The double-turreted monitor had no quarter-deck, but Stevens, restive in the iron box, got out on the deck between the turrets, and pacing to and fro alone in the storm, gave his orders now to one turret and then another. And what was more, the monitors were all driving ahead in the wake of the lost *Tecumseh* —driving toward the torpedoes.

But just then the captain of the *Brooklyn*, being in the lead of all, saw some little floats that marked the location of a nest of torpedoes, and first stopped and then backed his engines. It was not the right move for a ship in Farragut's squadron to make, and it threw the line into confusion, and held the ships under the hottest fire of the fort—held the *Hartford* in particular where the shot from the enemy turned her gun-deck into a slaughter pen so that blood ran in streams from her scuppers, and the splinters of her walls and bits of flesh and clothing from the dead were scattered in a

shower over the deck of the gunboat lashed alongside.

As the *Hartford* ranged up near the *Brooklyn*, Farragut, from his perch in the rigging, asked what was the trouble, and the one word "torpedoes" came back to him.

"D——n the torpedoes! Follow me," said the admiral, and as the *Hartford* took the lead of her column, he signalled for "close order."

A moment more, and the *Hartford* had reached the torpedo nest. The torpedo cases were distinctly heard striking against her bottom, and their primers were heard snapping, but not one exploded.

It was at this time that Captain Drayton, of the *Hartford*, seeing Farragut clinging to the shrouds just under the maintop, sent a sailor up to make fast a slender rope from one shroud to another in such a way that the admiral could not fall in case he was struck. It is so far literally true that Farragut was "lashed to the mast."

And then came the *Richmond* with her consort to narrowly escape a collision with the *Brookyln*, but as she turned away, her broadside was brought to bear fairly on the fort, and she opened such a rapid fire that she was wholly hid from view. Admiral Buchanan, who had watched her with more than ordinary

Battle of Mobile Bay.

From a painting by Admiral Walke.

interest because of a personal friendship for Captain Jenkins, was led to say:

"What became of Jenkins? I saw his vessel go handsomely into action, and then lost sight of her entirely."

Nevertheless, Jenkins was there, and in a most active condition of health. With the other larger ships, she helped to silence the forts so far that the last ships of the line passed in with but slight damage.

But once inside the line of torpedoes—torpedoes that had failed because made of tin that rusted away or because of other defects in make—the Union squadron had to face the Confederate ships. The Confederate gunboats had seemed of no moment at first, but as the *Hartford* advanced they retreated slowly, keeping within about 700 yards, and delivering an effective fire. Farragut sent the *Metacomet* after them, and she disabled the *Gaines*, drove another flying back to the fort, while the third, the *Selma*, kept on, with Jouett eager in the chase. The two were soon in shoal water, and the man at the lead on the *Metacomet* called out a foot less water than she drew. It was reported instantly to Jouett.

"Call the man in," said Jouett. "He is only intimidating me with his soundings."

Fortunately, it was a soft mud bottom. The *Metacomet* kept on. A squall came to hide

the *Selma*, but when it passed, Jouett was upon her, and her flag came down.

Meantime the *Tennessee* had run amuck among the Union squadron. Her first attempt to ram was on the *Hartford*, but the *Hartford* was swifter and handier, and so escaped. Then she passed the *Brooklyn*, the *Richmond*, and the *Lackawanna*, and turned toward the *Monongahela*. Captain Strong of this ship strove in turn to ram the *Tennessee*, and each glanced from the other. Thereafter the *Tennessee* passed clear through the fleet, doing and receiving but little damage. Then she turned near the fort to follow up the Union squadron.

At about this time (8.35 o'clock) Farragut ordered the men on the *Hartford* sent to breakfast. Captain Drayton said:

"What we have done has been well done, sir, but it all counts for nothing so long as the *Tennessee* is there under the guns of Morgan."

"I know it," said Farragut, "and as soon as the people have had their breakfasts I'm going for her."

The mess kits were on the deck when word came down that the *Tennessee*, instead of staying near Fort Morgan, as Farragut had supposed she would do, was coming. In a jiffy the scouse and coffee were sent back to the galley, and the men ran to their guns. The

anchor was slipped, and with signals flying to direct the *Monongahela*, *Lackawanna*, and *Ossipee* to ram the Confederate ship, and the monitors to attack her, the *Hartford* headed at full speed to lead the ramming gunboats. In this the spirit of Farragut was shown even more faithfully than when he braved the fire of the forts, for the *Tennessee* was a much more powerful ship than the *Merrimac*, and the *Hartford* was not so powerful as any of the steamers that lay in Hampton Roads when the *Merrimac* made her first raid. Indeed, one involuntarily compares the action of Farragut on this day with that of Goldsborough on the day that the *Merrimac* ran down within range of the Rip Raps, and defied a squadron gathered especially to ram her.

There was no hesitation at Mobile. The *Monongahela* was the first to reach the Confederate ship. Two raking shots were received, but at full speed the *Monongahela* struck her amidships on the starboard side, and a minute later, as the two swung side by side, the *Monongahela* gave her a broadside.

And then came the *Lackawanna* to ram the *Tennessee* on the port side. A good blow it was too; but as the *Hartford* approached to give a third blow, the *Tennessee* turned so that she and the *Hartford* struck bow to bow, but both glanced clear.

A broadside from the *Hartford* also proved harmless, but the *Tennessee*, that had been unable to return the fire for some time on account of defective primers, managed to discharge one shell that entered the *Hartford*, though it did no material damage. And then the danger of mobbing a ship, as the *Tennessee* was mobbed, became apparent, for the *Lackawanna*, in coming around to ram again, struck the *Hartford* instead of the *Tennessee*, and narrowly missed sinking her, while Farragut, by an equally narrow margin, escaped death, for he was standing near where the *Lackawanna* struck.

Meantime the three monitors were coming with all speed, the *Chickasaw* burning tallow and tar to get up steam faster. Passing along the *Tennessee's* port side, the *Chickasaw* got under the stern of the Confederate, and there she hung, working her four eleven-inch guns with deadly accuracy. The monitors *Manhattan* and *Winnebago* both attacked the *Tennessee*, but one of the former's guns was accidentally spiked, and the latter's turret machinery failed, and it was the *Chickasaw* that did the work.

"D——n him!" said the *Tennessee's* pilot afterward. "He stuck to us like a leach; we could not get away from him. It was he who cut away the steering gear, jammed

the stern port shutters and wounded Admiral Buchanan."

And that was true. Both the bow and the stern port shutters were jammed so that the guns of the *Tennessee* could not be worked at the ends of the ship. Her smoke-stack was shot away, and the smoke from the stump poured down through the upper-deck gratings to fill the casemate, where the temperature had risen to 120 degrees. Buchanan, to clear one of the port shutters, sent for a machinist and personally superintended his work for a few moments, when one of the *Chickasaw's* projectiles struck the iron plating just outside where the machinist was at work, and the concussion, although the shot did not enter, reduced the man to a pulp, so that his remains were shovelled into buckets to be carried away. Worse yet for the ship, an iron splinter was driven through the admiral's leg, breaking the bone.

It was near this time that the tiller chains were carried away, and that completed the needed work of destruction. Capt. J. D. Johnson took command of her when Buchanan fell, and for twenty minutes longer endured the hammering while wholly unable to return the fire or steer the ship. But to hold out longer under such circumstances was useless, and the flag was hauled down.

As it happened, the flag had been shot down

before, and it was flying from a boat hook thrust up through a deck grating. The Union forces, supposing the flag had been shot away again, continued firing, and to end the matter Johnson went on the upper deck and waved a white flag.

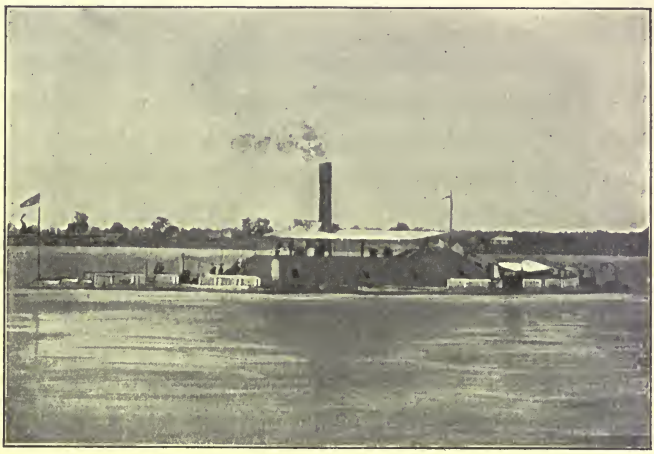
Just then the *Ossipee* came slicing through the water at top speed to ram the *Tennessee.* Captain Le Roy was out on deck, and recognized Johnson instantly as an old friend. Sheering the *Ossipee* to one side, he shouted cheerfully :

"Hello, Johnson, old fellow! How are you? This is the United States steamer *Ossipee.* I'll send a boat alongside for you. I'm Le Roy; don't you know me?"

The boat was sent. The American flag was hoisted on the *Tennessee.* The battle was ended.

Farragut, in his report, gave special praise to the following men : Capts. Percival Drayton and Thornton A. Jenkins; Commanders Mullany, Nicholson, and Stevens; Lieut.-commanders Jouett and Perkins ; Lieutenants Watson and Yates; Acting-Ensigns Henry C. Nields, Bogart, and Heginbotham; Ensign Henry Howard Brownell, Secretary McKinley, the pilot Martin Freeman, Acting Volunteer Lieuts. William Hamilton and P. Giraud. Of his crew he said : "I have never

seen a crew come up like ours. They are ahead of the old set in small arms, and fully equal to them at the great guns. They arrived here a mere lot of boys and young men, and have now fattened up and knocked the 9-inch guns about like 24-pounders, to the as-



The Confederate Ram *Tennessee*, Captured at Mobile.

From a photograph.

tonishment of everybody. There was but one man who showed fear, and he was allowed to resign. This was the most desperate battle I ever fought since the days of the old *Essex*."

A consideration of this fight shows that the Union forces had their blood up, and that nothing but an impregnable ship could have withstood this onslaught. The *Tennessee* was

not that kind of a ship. The defects in the shutters and the steering gear, and the inability to keep up the fires after the smoke-stack fell, ruined her chances. These matters must be emphasized because such defects are inevitable in ships built during actual war. The Confederacy lacked ships just as the United States would lack them in case a war with a first-class nation were suddenly precipitated upon us, and the ships we should then build would very likely fail, as the *Tennessee* failed. It is worth noting that not one shot penetrated the *Tennessee's* casemate, but one from the *Manhattan* bulged the wood backing of the armor into a mass of splinters.

The *Tennessee* lost two killed and ten wounded. The Union forces lost fifty-two killed by shots, 120 drowned in the *Tecumseh*, and 170 wounded.

The *Chickasaw* shelled Fort Gaines on the 6th, and it surrendered next day. The fort on the other point was invested by the troops as well as the ships, the shelling beginning on the 22d of August, and the next day it surrendered. This effectually closed Mobile harbor as a port for blockade-runners, but the city was not taken until the middle of the next spring. The naval forces helped in bombarding the defences about the city, but the only incidents of real importance to history of this

kind were the various losses from torpedoes. The bay was swept for torpedoes thoroughly, and yet the *Milwaukee* ran on one on returning from a trip up to shell a fort near the city, and was sunk. The *Osage*, in shifting her anchorage in a fresh breeze, was sunk in like fashion. The wrecking steamer *Rodolph*, while going to raise the *Milwaukee*, struck another and went down. Even after the Confederate troops withdrew and 150 torpedoes had been removed from the Tombigbee channel, two tugs and a launch struck torpedoes and were destroyed. The danger from such obstructions had never been so well shown as at Mobile.

CHAPTER XIV

TALES OF THE CONFEDERATE CRUISERS

THE MOST INSTRUCTIVE CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES—WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY AN ENERGETIC SEAMAN IN A SHIP HIS BROTHER OFFICERS CONDEMNED—BRILLIANT WORK OF THE *FLORIDA* UNDER JOHN NEWLAND MAFFIT—BAD MARKSMANSHIP AND A WORSE LOOKOUT OFF MOBILE—A CASE OF VIOLATED NEUTRALITY—SEMMES AND THE *ALABAMA*—THE BATTLE WITH THE *KEARSARGE*—WHAT KIND OF A MAN IS IT THAT FIGHTS HIS SHIP TILL SHE SINKS UNDER HIM?—AMERICAN COMMERCE DESTROYED—THE BRITISH WITHOUT A RIVAL ON THE SEA, AT LAST, AND AT VERY SMALL COST.

THE most instructive chapter in the history of the United States is that relating to the deeds of the cruisers in the Confederate navy; for, though few in number, they proved to the world that the over-sea commerce of a nation at war could be swept away entirely by means so inexpensive and of such little power as to be absolutely insignificant. Consider the first Confederate cruiser worth mention—the *Sumter*. She was a small coaster lying at New Orleans. Her cabins for passengers were on deck, and her coal-carrying capacity was equal to but five days at sea, and her hull was so

frail that she was condemned by a board of able Confederate officers who examined her. But Raphael Semmes eagerly took hold of her. He cleared away the cabin hamper on deck, overhauled her sails and rigging, mounted an eight-inch pivot and some thirty-two-pounders from the Norfolk Navy Yard, and then did one other thing to her worth especial mention: "The engine which was partly above the water line was protected by a system of woodwork and iron bars." So says Semmes' "Memoirs"; and that is important because he said the captain of the *Kearsarge*, having used chains for armor, was unchivalrous. He began work on April 22, 1861. On June 3d he put her in commission under the name of *Sumter*. Thereafter some time was spent in drilling the crew, and then he dropped down to the head of the Passes to wait opportunity

Raphael Semmes.

From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall.

to get to sea. Very naturally he was astonished to find that the *Brooklyn*, the only blockading steamer, was lying out at sea instead of anchoring at the head of the Passes. He was also astonished that he was not attacked by the *Brooklyn* during the nine days that he lay there, and the reader is likely to share his feeling. And then came Sunday, June 30th. While the men on the *Sumter* prepared themselves for the usual man-o'-war inspection, a report that the *Brooklyn* was off on a chase was received.

Instantly preparations began for a run to sea. It was a hopeless attempt in the eyes of one of her lieutenants, for he had been on the *Brooklyn*, and thought her the faster ship; but Semmes was a daredevil who would "make a spoon or spoil a horn." As they approached the bar the *Brooklyn* was seen coming, and she was but four miles away when the *Sumter* crossed the bar. But she did not overhaul the *Sumter*. There was a fresh breeze, and both ships made sail. The *Sumter* had large fore and aft sails, which enabled her, when they were set, to lie closer to the wind than the *Brooklyn* could do, and the *Sumter* fairly ran her out of sight.

As the pilot left the *Sumter* at the bar he said to Semmes: "Now, Captain, you are all clear; give her h–ll and let her go," and that is just what Semmes did after "this bold and

dashing adventure," as Porter calls it. Going to the south coast of Cuba, he fell in with his first prize, a ship called the *Golden Rocket*, "from the Black Republican State of Maine." A gun —the first fired by any Confederate naval officer afloat—brought her to, with the American flag flying. She was found to be in ballast, and was, of course, burned. Her flag was marked with her name and the date of capture, and stowed in a bag, where many others came to keep it company, for Semmes saved all the flags he captured, and when the *Alabama* was at last shot from under his feet he says: "I committed to the keeping of the guardian spirits of that famous battle ground a great many bags full of 'old flags,' to be stowed away in the caves of the sea as mementoes that a nation once lived whose naval officers loved liberty more than the false memorial of it, and who were capable, when it became 'Hate's polluted rag,' of tearing it down."

Within three days Semmes captured five American vessels, three of which he determined to carry into a Cuban port. On the fourth day, being then off Cienfuegos, he saw three more come out, and by hoisting false colors he disguised his ship so that they all proceeded on their courses until a marine league or more from the coast, when they were

captured, and all taken into port. Semmes hoped that he should be able to sell them as prizes, but the Cuban authorities, after proper consideration, refused to allow this to be done.

In explanation of the refusal it should be said that when England declared in favor of granting the South belligerent rights, orders were issued that "required every ship-of-war or privateer of either belligerent which should enter British waters to depart within twenty-four hours afterwards, except in case of stress of weather, or of her requiring provisions, or things necessary for the subsistence of her crew, or repairs. In either of these cases she was to put to sea as soon after the expiration of the twenty-four hours as possible, taking in no supplies beyond what might be necessary for immediate use, and no more coal than would carry her to the nearest port of her own country, or some nearer destination. Nor, after coaling once in British waters, was she to be suffered to coal again within three months unless by special permission." These orders were very annoying to the North, because when made, the Confederates had not a single ship of any kind afloat. It was simply excluding United States warships from what had once been friendly ports. On the other hand, the determination that no prizes should be sold in British ports was a hardship upon the

South, because it prevented the Southern cruisers, that were eventually sent afloat, disposing of their prizes. Because of it the South did not sell a single prize, for the other nations followed England's lead in this matter. But, on the whole, it must be said that while England's attitude toward the cruisers of the two belligerents was, by the letter of the law, that of strict neutrality, the operation of this neutrality was a much greater hardship to the North than to the South, considered as national governments. The crews of the Confederate cruisers failed to get any prize money, but they could "sink, burn, and destroy *ad lib.*" They were about as great a menace to American commerce as if they had been getting prize money. There is now no disputing the oft-repeated assertion that England managed to maintain a neutrality that should help the South and hurt the North as much as was possible without causing open war with the United States.

Having failed to get his prizes sold in Cuba, because Spain had followed England in refusing to allow such sales in her ports, Semmes took another prize, the *Abby Bradford*, to Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, hoping to find a market there. He says of this attempt:

"All these small South American towns are, more or less, dependent upon American

trade. The New England States and New York supply them with their domestic cottons, flour, bacon, and notions; sell them all their worthless old muskets, and damaged ammunition, and now and then, smuggle out a small craft to them, for naval purposes. The American Consul, who is also a merchant, represents not only those 'grand moral ideas,' that characterize our Northern people, but Sand's sarsaparilla, and Smith's wooden clocks. He is, *par excellence*, the big dog of the village. The big dog was present on the present occasion, looking portentous and savage, and when he ope'd his mouth, all the little dogs were silent. Of course, the poor *Sumter*, anchored away off in the bay, could have no chance before so august an assemblage."

The *Abby Bradford* was ordered to New Orleans, but the *Powhatan*, Capt. D. D. Porter, captured her.

The *Sumter* was at Puerto Cabello on July 26th. She had taken nine prizes cruising in the island region of the Caribbean Sea. To follow her in all the details of her voyage would be monotonous. The reader can find the story in full, even to the number of ladies who showered their favors upon the Confederate captain, for Semmes was so proud of all of his conquests as to omit none. She was usually under sail, but used coal in chasing, and

was able to renew her supply at Trinidad as well as other ports.

Meantime Semmes had been carrying a considerable number of merchant seamen to abide the fate of the crew of the *Savannah* (privateer) who were held for trial in New York on a charge of piracy. Semmes informed these merchant seamen that he should hang them if the *Savannah's* crew were executed, and he says himself he should have done so, but does not tell by what process of reasoning he concluded it would be right to retaliate on men not engaged in warring against the Confederacy.

From Trinidad the *Sumter* went down the Brazil coast to Maranham, and thence to a point near the equator, where homeward-bound American ships from South America crossed, and then back to the Caribbean Sea islands, where, eventually, at St. Pierre, she was blockaded by the *Iroquois*. The *Iroquois'* captain made a mistake. He arranged with an American shipmaster in the harbor to hoist signals, in case the *Sumter* sailed at night, to tell what course she was steering from the open roadstead. The signals were duly hoisted as Semmes started away south, but Semmes saw and understood them, and after running a mile or two with the *Iroquois* making all steam to head him off, he turned around and ran away to the north and escaped.

The *Sumter* now went to Spain, stopping at Cadiz, where she was not cordially received, and from there went to Gibraltar, where, as Semmes says, "the army and navy of Great Britain were with us almost to a man," while "the Yankee officers of the several Federal ships of war, which by this time had arrived, were kept at arm's length. No other than the customary official courtesies were extended to them. We certainly did not meet any of them at the club."

However, if the *Sumter's* officers had a good time ashore, they were unable to have one afloat, for the "several Federal ships" that had arrived effectually blockaded her. The work she did and the fate of the ship are thus summed up by Semmes:

"She cruised six months, leaving out the time during which she was blockaded in Gibraltar. She captured eighteen ships, as follows: the *Golden Rocket*, *Cuba*, *Machias*, *Ben. Dunning*, *Albert Adams*, *Naiad*, *Louisa Kilham*, *West Wind*, *Abby Bradford*, *Joseph Maxwell*, *Joseph Parke*, *D. Trowbridge*, *Montmorency*, *Arcade*, *Vigilant*, *Eben Dodge*, *Neapolitan*, and *Investigator*. It is impossible to estimate the damage done to the enemy's commerce. The property actually destroyed formed a very small proportion of it. The fact alone of the *Sumter* being upon the seas,

during these six months, gave such an alarm to neutral and belligerent shippers, that the enemy's carrying-trade began to be paralyzed, and already his ships were being laid up, or sold under neutral flags—some of these sales being *bona fide*, and others fraudulent. In addition to this, the enemy kept five or six of his best ships of war constantly in pursuit of her, which necessarily weakened his blockade, for which, at this time, he was much pressed for ships. The expense to my Government of running the ship was next to nothing, being only $28,000, or about the price of one of the least valuable of her prizes. The *Sumter* was sold in the course of a month or two after being laid up, and being put under the English flag as a merchant-ship, made one voyage to the coast of the Confederate States, as a blockade-runner, entering the port of Charleston. Her new owner changed her name to that of *Gibraltar*. She was lost afterward in the North Sea."

The next cruiser to be considered was named the *Florida*. She was built at Liverpool under the name of *Oreto*. The American officials learned, while she was building, that she was of the same model and scantling as the best British gunboats of that day. She had ports for four guns. On February 18, 1862, complaint was made to the British government

by the American representative charging that she was building for use as a Confederate cruiser, whereat "orders were given that she be vigilantly watched." On March 3d she was registered in the name of a member of a Sicilian firm, then in Liverpool, and cleared for "Palermo, the Mediterranean and Jamaica" in ballast. She sailed on March 22d with a crew of fifty men, but she went directly to Nassau, in the Bahamas. When there she appeared as a merchant ship consigned by Fraser, Trenholm & Co., of Liverpool, notorious as Confederate agents, to their Nassau house. Here, on complaint of the United States consul, she was libelled, and there was a farce of a trial in the Nassau court. Of course she was released. It was proved that she had taken on munitions of war, but these had been sent ashore again, and to the mind of the court she was a genuine British merchantman. Meantime her crew asked the British authorities to discharge them, alleging as a reason for the request that they had been deceived when they shipped in her. She had been represented as a merchantman, they said, but it was plain she was a man-o'-war, and they did not want to fight. On this plea they were at once discharged.

On August 2d she cleared for Havana, shipped twenty-two men of the blockade-run-

ning class, went to a desolate island called Green Key, and met a vessel that had brought out a first-class English armament of two seven-inch rifles and six six-inch guns. Her new commander was John Newland Maffitt, formerly of the American navy, and one who, because of his good qualities, did not lose his friends there when he forsook the flag. Maffitt was so pressed for men that he worked as a common sailor himself to transfer the arms. In fact, every man on board worked so hard that when one man came down with yellow fever the others took it. The ship reached Cardenas, in spite of losses from the fever. While still ill with the fever, Maffitt was compelled by the authorities to go to Havana.

Finding he should never get a crew there, he decided on the desperate expedient of running over to Mobile and braving the blockade, although he had barely enough men to man the stoke-hole.

The blockaders were sighted on September 4, 1862, and Maffitt, with just one man on deck to steer, hoisted the British flag, and headed directly for the blockaders.

At that time Commander George H. Preble was in charge of the station, and he had the *Oneida* and *Winona* under him. Seeing a boat exactly like a British gunboat, and under British colors, and knowing that British gun-

boats were frequently sent alongshore to see whether the ports were really blockaded, Preble was deceived. He called his men to quarters and approached the stranger, but did not seem to have been suspicious when he saw that she was running at full speed and had no men on deck. He hailed her when near enough, and got no reply. Then he fired, in rather slow succession, three shots across her bow. As she still kept on he opened on her with a broadside, and the *Winona* joined in.

The *Florida* was but 300 yards away, and yet so wretched was the American marksmanship, that the broadsides cut the rigging and tore away the upper part of her bulwarks. One shell did, indeed, pass through and through the *Florida* near the water-line, to explode beyond her, but it did her no material damage. She passed in clear. The remarks which all the writers on the subject make about the narrow margin of luck in the time fuse of that one shell are not adapted to increase one's respect for the ability of the gunners. It is a fact, as already noted, that the gunners of the war of 1861 were not to be compared in skill with those of 1812. And this is a subject that cannot be impressed deeply enough on the minds of American readers. For we may shout "Tirez! Tirez toujour!" as the Frenchman did, till we are blind, and still suffer de-

feat unless we can hit the target when we fire.

As between John N. Maffitt, sitting alone on deck because unable to stand—alone save for the man at the wheel—while his ship made that desperate dash for home, and the Union forces wasting their ammunition on the salt-sea air, one cannot hesitate long in bestowing his sympathy even if Maffitt was an enemy of the flag. It was a most heroic deed on one side and a sorry exhibit of incompetence on the other. On the other hand, when Preble was dismissed the punishment was unjust, for he had done his duty as he saw it. He had given his men all the target practice that the regulations provided. The fault was not in the man, but in the naval regulations that are careful to provide that every man blacks his shoes daily and limit the target practice of the gunners to, say, ten shots a year.

When Maffitt had recruited his health and a good crew, he found the blockading squadron increased, among other ships, by the *Cuyler*, Capt. Francis Winslow, that, because of her speed, was sent there especially to take him should he run out. But little that worried Maffitt. At 2 o'clock on the morning of January 16, 1863, he was ready, and out he went.

The lookout on the *Cuyler* saw him coming

The *Florida* Running the Blockade at Mobile.

After a painting by R. S. Floyd.

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when he was a long way from the bar, and notified the officer of the deck. Now, there was a regulation on the *Cuyler* which forbade the officer of the deck slipping the cable until Captain Winslow was on deck to order it done. By this regulation just a half hour's time was lost. So the *Florida* was away, passing between the *Susquehanna* and the *Cuyler* at a distance of 300 yards while the *Cuyler* was still at anchor. The *Cuyler* did get under way at last, and chased the *Florida* until the next night, when the *Florida* changed her course and escaped.

The *Oneida's* crew saw the signal announcing the coming of the *Florida*, and beat to quarters, but remained at anchor, although she was one of the swifter vessels present. And she remained at anchor until 3.50 o'clock, when, to quote her log, "having seen no vessel run out, beat the retreat." Porter calls this affair "the greatest example of blundering committed throughout the war." Certainly the captains of the *Cuyler* and the *Oneida* were not fit for their commands.

Maffitt went to Nassau, where the British population went delirious with joy over his success, and sold him coal to last three months, instead of enough to last to the nearest Confederate port, as the government orders had provided. Then Maffitt went cruising between

New York and Brazil. In the course of five months he took seventeen prizes, and then went to Brest, France, where the ship was thoroughly overhauled.

Meantime Maffitt fitted one of his prizes, the *Clarence*, with light guns, and sent her cruising under Lieut. Charles W. Read. Read was as brave and dashing as Maffitt. Between the 6th and 10th of May, 1863, he took five prizes, shifting his flag to the fifth, the *Tacony*, and burning the *Clarence*. Then he took ten prizes, including the *Archer*, to which he made another shift. With the *Archer* he came to off Portland, Maine, and with small boats rowed in and cut out the revenue cutter *Caleb Cushing*. The *Archer* was a sailing ship. Read burned the *Cushing*, but steamers overhauled him next day and he was captured.

At Brest, Maffitt was relieved by Capt. Charles M. Morris, who took the *Florida* to Bahia, where Capt. Napoleon Collins, in the *Wachusett*, found her. Morris thought he was safe, and with half his crew went ashore. Collins rammed the *Florida*, fired a few shots into her, and took her to the United States. That carrying her home was a very grave mistake will soon appear; for a more open violation of a neutral port was never recorded, and if a naval officer feels justified in such an act he should not try to get prize money out of it,

"A Prize Disposed and one Proposed."

(The *Florida* in chase, having burnt the *Star of Peace*.)

After a painting by R. S. Floyd.

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but make an end of his capture as soon as possible.

In considering violations of neutral ports, one may say that in practice the neutral port of a weak power has always been violated whenever there was any occasion for it. Moreover, since respect for a neutral port is a matter of courtesy only, we may be sure that whenever wars shall occur in future, weak neutral ports will be violated as they have been in the past. It is a question of policy in each case, and the captain of the aggressive ship must decide for himself whether the circumstances warrant the insult to the weak power.

As to this particular case, it is the sentiment of the people of the United States, if the writer knows that sentiment, that Captain Collins was entirely justified in capturing the *Florida*, especially as the Brazil authorities had permitted Semmes, of the *Alabama*, to use Fernando de Noronha as headquarters, so to speak, while cruising against American commerce. Indeed, Semmes took an American ship, the *Louisa Hatch*, into the port at that island, coaled his ship from her, and then towed her outside and burned her. While lying there, too, he saw two American vessels in the offing, went out and burned them, and came back again within a few hours to hobnob with the Governor. The mouth of Brazil was stopped. If Collins

had sunk the *Florida* in port or burned her outside, it would have been proper for the United States government to set off the *Alabama's* case against that of the *Wachusett*, and leave it to arbitration to decide which government should pay damages. But the most interesting feature of this case is found in the attitude of the British writers on the subject. When one recalls how the *Essex* was captured at Valparaiso after Porter's too generous treatment of Hillyar, and how the *Armstrong* was attacked in the Azores, and how the *Levant* was taken at Porto Praya, one might suppose that the British would be rather lenient with their cousins across the sea, especially as blood is thicker than water; but we find in a work printed in 1896, called "Ironclads in Action," by H. W. Wilson, a work that deals with ironclads as late as 1895, the capture of the *Florida* is denounced (page 151, vol. 1) as "disgraceful." The writer really goes out of his way to do this, for neither the *Wachusett* nor the *Florida* was an ironclad in any sense. Moreover, he asserts that "the *Florida's* officers were very badly treated," which is simply a false statement.

Nevertheless, there was one disgraceful feature of the *Florida* affair. When Brazil demanded the restoration of the ship with her crew on board in the harbor of Bahia, the

United States agreed to give her up, and Collins, who had captured her, was ordered to take her back as a punishment for his violation of international law. But the *Florida* never left the waters of the United States as a warship. She was lying at Hampton Roads when the order was issued—lying "just at the spot where the *Cumberland* was sunk in very deep water. An engineer was placed on board in charge with two men to assist him in looking after the water cocks; but, strangely enough, although the *Florida* was to all appearances water tight when she reached Newport News, she sank that night at 2 o'clock in ten fathoms." "When the sinking of the vessel was reported to Admiral Porter (he was there fitting for the Fort Fisher expedition) he merely said 'Better so'; while the Secretary of State and Secretary of the Navy never asked any questions."

Those quotations are from Admiral Porter's "Naval History of the Civil War," and they are not unlikely to give the reader a choking sensation, for they show that the sinking of the *Florida* was the work of a sneak—that the "two men," when "looking after the water cocks," opened them under orders. The humiliating story is inserted here because the shame of it should serve to prevent the necessity of ever writing another of the kind.

The story of the *Alabama* is longer but not

more interesting than that of the *Florida*. She was built by the Lairds and was known as *No. 290*, because she was the 290th ship the firm had built. The British government had full information that she was building for a Confederate cruiser under the supervision of Commander James D. Bullock of the Confederate navy, and, later, that Bullock was shipping men (British subjects) for her, promising petty offices to this and that capable man. The reader who wants to go into the details of this matter will find plenty of them in an Englishman's work on the "Neutrality of Great Britain during the American Civil War," by Mountague Bernard, of Oxford University. It furnishes, curiously enough, abundant proof that England escaped with a light penalty when in court in the matter of the "*Alabama* claims."

The *Alabama* was a perfect cruiser for her day—long, lean, and shoal of draft. She was 230 feet long, only thirty-two wide, and she drew but fifteen feet of water. She had the rig of a barkentine, with long lower masts to give her plenty of fore and aft sail so that she could lie closer to the wind than any ordinary square-rigged ship. She had also a steam power able to drive her ten knots an hour, and her screw propeller could be detached and hoisted out of water whenever it was desir-

able to work with sails only. She carried eight guns, of which one was a hundred-pounder Blakely rifle, mounted on a pivot forward; one an eight-inch smooth-bore on a pivot aft, and six were thirty-twos in broadside.

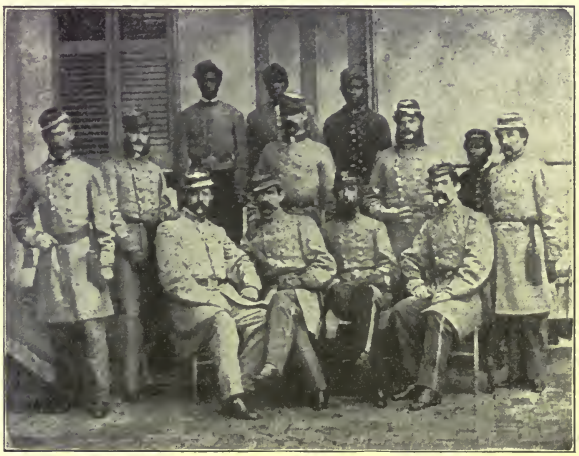
Semmes, for his activity in the *Sumter*, was ordered to the new cruiser. He gathered his officers and crew at Liverpool, and shipping the outfit of all kinds in the merchant ship *Bahama*, he, with all hands, took passage in her. The cruiser, that was still known only as *No. 290*, was allowed to go on a trial trip. Although the ship was plainly a cruiser, and although men had testified under oath that they had shipped in her as a Confederate cruiser, the law officer of the customs authority decided that the evidence was insufficient, and she did not return from that trial trip. She met the *Bahama* at Terceira, a Portuguese island, and there, a marine league from land, on Sunday, August 24, 1862, *No. 290* became the *Alabama*, and Semmes her captain, in the usual form. She was without any doubt a Confederate man-of-war. The people who still persist in calling her a pirate craft are probably unaware that if she had really been a pirate the United States would never have presented any claims against Great Britain for the damages she did to American commerce. And as for Semmes, he is entitled, in his official capacity as her

captain, to as courteous treatment at the hands of historians as any captains that ever went afloat. Of his personal character it need only be said that he has written it into his "Memoirs."

To his "Memoirs," also, the reader may be referred for details of the burning of the hosts of American merchantmen that he captured. From Terceira the *Alabama* made a cruise against the whalers off the Azores, and thence went to Martinique, where the American warship *San Jacinto* found her. But Semmes escaped on the night of October 20, 1862. His first prize of consequence after this adventure was the *Ariel* of the Panama line. She was expected to bring a million or so in gold, but in this Semmes was disappointed.

From the place where the *Ariel* was captured Semmes went to Galveston to intercept the transports of the Banks expedition, of which he had read in captured papers. As he approached Galveston, on the afternoon of January 11, 1863, the *Hatteras*, a merchant steamer fitted with guns, was sent off to inspect him. Semmes pretended to run, and so drew the *Hatteras* away from the other blockaders, and then at 7 P.M. (it was dark of course) lay to for her. When the *Hatteras* ranged up and hailed, Semmes said his ship was "Her Britannic Majesty's ship *Vixen*."

Capt. H. C. Blake, of the *Hatteras*, said he would send a boat, but when the boat had been lowered Semmes shouted, "We are the Confederate steamer *Alabama*," and fired a broadside. Semmes was not at any time more than 100 yards away, and the *Hatteras*, a pad-



Raphael Semmes and his *Alabama* Officers.

From a photograph owned by C. B. Hall.

dle-wheel steamer, was soon riddled. Blake tried to get alongside the *Alabama* to board, but could not do it, of course, and the *Hatteras* was soon rapidly sinking. A lee gun was fired and help called for. The living were all taken off by the *Alabama's* crew, save the boat's crew that had started to board the *Alabama*.

The *Hatteras* carried two short thirty-twos and two small rifles—a twenty-pounder and a thirty-pounder—that she was able to bring to bear. The prisoners were landed at Jamaica.

From this point Semmes went to the coast of Brazil, and then off to the point near the equator where homeward-bound American Indiamen cross the line. It was on the Brazil coast, in April, 1863, that he gave the Americans good excuse, by his violations of neutral waters, for the taking of the *Florida*. In July he went to the Cape of Good Hope, and at Cape Town was even more heartily welcomed than he had been at Gibraltar when in the *Sumter*. Here is the way he describes his reception :

" During my entire stay, my table was loaded with flowers, and the most luscious grapes, and other fruits, sent off to me every morning, by the ladies of the Cape, sometimes with, and sometimes without, a name. Something has been said before about the capacity of the heart of a sailor. My own was carried by storm on the present occasion. I simply surrendered at discretion, and whilst Kell was explaining the virtues of his guns to his male visitors, and answering the many questions that were put to him about our cruisers and captures, I found it as much as I could do, to write autographs, and answer the pretty little

perfumed billets that came off to me. Dear ladies of the Cape of Good Hope!"

Perhaps while we are about it, it may be worth while to make one more quotation to show the full extent of the gallantry of which Semmes makes boast in every chapter. It will be found on page 620 of the "Memoirs," where he describes the Brazilian people, but no part of the original is italicized:

"The effete Portuguese race has been ingrafted upon a stupid, stolid, Indian stock, in that country. The freed negro is, besides, the equal of the white man, and as there seems to be no repugnance, on the part of the white race—so called—to mix with the black race, and with the Indian, amalgamation will go on in that country, until a mongrel set of curs will cover the whole land. This might be *a suitable field enough for the New England school-ma'am*, and carpet-bagger, but no Southern gentleman should think of mixing his blood or casting his lot with such a race of people."

At Cape Town Semmes was troubled a little by "the stereotyped American consul; half diplomat, half demagogue." The American consuls were in chase wherever he entered a port, but the truth is that they were rarely able to do more than accumulate facts that were eventually handed in along with the bill

for damages when the *Alabama* claims got into court in 1871.

Before reaching Cape Town a prize was turned into a cruiser, and she was of some little consequence in the Cape waters, but did nothing as compared with what the dashing Read accomplished on the American coast.

John A. Winslow.
From a photograph.

From the Cape of Good Hope Semmes went to the East Indies, where he found a harvest of prizes, came back to the Cape, and eventually went to Europe; and late at night, on the 10th of June, 1864, the *Alabama* reached Cherbourg, France, which was her last port, for there the *Kearsarge*, Capt. John A. Winslow, caught her.

It is to the credit of Captain Semmes that he had no wish to escape the Federal ship, though he says that had he known that the *Kearsarge* had been armored by placing iron cables on her sides opposite her machinery he should not have done so. Ship for ship and crew for crew, the *Alabama* was inferior to the

Kearsarge by a greater extent than has usually been told in history. In size they were practically the same—1,031 tons for the *Kearsarge* and 1,016 for the *Alabama*, but the *Kearsarge* was the swifter ship of the two. The *Alabama* carried eight guns, and she fired 328 pounds of metal at a broadside. The *Kearsarge* carried seven guns, and fired 366 pounds at a broadside; but these figures do not fully tell the superiority of the guns of the *Kearsarge*, for her two pivots were eleven-inch Dahlgrens, a style of gun that, at the range of this battle, and in a fight between unarmored ships, were far superior to the 100-pounder Blakely and the eight-inch (sixty-four-pounder) smooth-bore on the *Alabama*. And, then, in the crews the *Kearsarge* carried 163 men, chiefly Americans, to the *Alabama's* 149, almost exclusively Europeans. The officers of the *Alabama* were about the only ones who had any sentiment in the fight; the men before the mast were at best filibusters—as ragged a crew (mentally) as that of the *Bonhomme Richard*. That they should have made any fight at all was due to the training received from men who had been reared under the old flag. Another great difference was in the powder, for that on the *Alabama* was very old and bad.

The *Alabama* remained in Cherbourg until Sunday, June 19, 1864, when soon after 9

o'clock Semmes headed her out of the harbor. The French ironclad *Couronne* went along to see that the fight took place three sea miles from shore, and a steam yacht, the *Deerhound*, followed to give her owner and his family a chance to see a sea battle. The shores were soon covered with equally eager if less fortunate spectators, trains being run from Paris to bring people to the fight. And the sympathy of nearly all the spectators was with the Confederate ship.

Captain Winslow steamed off shore until seven miles from land, and then at 10.50 o'clock turned and drove the *Kearsarge* straight at the Confederate cruiser. At 10.57, when the ships were yet 1,800 yards apart, the *Alabama* yawed enough to open fire with a broadside. It was aimed rather worse, perhaps, than that which the *Oneida* fired into the *Florida* off Mobile, for the shot flew over the *Kearsarge*. Two more broadsides were fired from the *Alabama* as the *Kearsarge* approached head on, but when the *Kearsarge*, at a range of 900 yards, was seen to be heading to run across the *Alabama's* stern, the *Alabama* started off in a way that set the two ships running "in a circle against the sun"—starboard side to starboard side, gradually approaching nearer and nearer, while the current swept them slowly down the coast.

Engagement between the U. S. S. *Kearsarge* and the *Alabama* off Cherbourg, on Sunday, June 19, 1864.

From a French lithograph.

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As this circling was started the *Kearsarge* opened fire. Word was sent to every gunner to "make every shot count," and they obeyed. The gunnery of the *Kearsarge* was the best shown during the Civil War. The *Alabama* fired rapidly—she hurled 370 shot in sixty-five minutes, of which only twenty-eight struck the *Kearsarge.* Of these, two were turned by the chain armor, but had they penetrated they would have had no serious effect. One shell penetrated the stern post, but failed to explode. Had it exploded, the *Kearsarge* would have had difficulty in steering—perhaps she would have been made helpless; but the battle was then so far done that the *Alabama* would, at best, have been able to escape.

The *Kearsarge* fired only 173 shot, but so many of these struck home that before the end of an hour the *Alabama* was sinking.

Hoisting trysail and jib, Semmes headed for the shore, hoping to escape with the aid of his sails, but it was too late. The *Kearsarge* ran across her bow to deliver a raking broadside, and then the *Alabama* hauled down her flag. A little later a white flag was displayed, and then it was seen that the *Alabama* was rapidly settling in the water. A boat put off from her to ask for assistance. The *Kearsarge* sent two boats to rescue the crew, and the steam yacht *Deerhound* came up to help also. Semmes

seeing at last that she must sink, threw his sword into the sea and leaped overboard, and while he swam for life the *Alabama's* stern sank under the sea, the bow was lifted high out of water, and down she went, with her bowsprit disappearing last of all.

There was some diplomatic trouble over the escape of a lot of the *Alabama's* crew, including Semmes, on the *Deerhound*. The reader will, perhaps, be able to determine the rights of the *Deerhound* in this case by putting himself mentally in her owner's place. Suppose Ireland should secede from Great Britain and an Irish cruiser should be sunk in the presence of a Yankee yacht. Would the Yankee yacht-owner deliver up the Irishmen's crew to the triumphant British warship? Certainly, if the Yankee yacht-owner was a politician, he would not do so.

And, then, there were the virulent attacks on Semmes for swimming to the *Deerhound* instead of swimming to the *Kearsarge*. What would the reader have done? What would that other "pirate," John Paul Jones, have done in a case like that?

It is now thirty-seven years since the *Alabama* sank in the green waves off Cherbourg. Those of us who were old enough to read the newspaper extras that were issued when the account of it was telegraphed home are old

The *Kearsarge* Sinking the *Alabama*.

From an engraving.

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Action between the *Kearsarge* and the *Alabama*.

(Rescue of the crew of the *Alabama* by the *Deerhound*.)

From an engraving of the painting by Chappel.

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enough to know better than to call Semmes a pirate.

Semmes having escaped to England, was counted a hero there, and a fine sword was given to him to replace the one he threw into the sea. Let the prejudiced shipowner who lost money through the work of this sea rover candidly ask himself what kind of a sea captain it is who, knowing his force is inferior, sails boldly out to meet a watchful enemy, and then fights till his ship is shot from under his feet.

Raphael Semmes earned the right off Cherbourg to have his name inscribed in the list of the sea heroes of America.

The total number of prizes made by the *Alabama* was sixty-nine, of which fifty-three were destroyed, two had their cargoes only destroyed, and eleven were bonded. The *Florida* took thirty-seven, of which twenty-eight were destroyed. While the number taken was but a small percentage of the American merchant fleet, the effect of the captures was to raise insurance rates, frighten shippers as well as shipowners, and so prevent the employment of the ships at sea. The carrying trade utterly abandoned American ships.

There were a few other Confederate cruisers, the *Shenandoah* being the most important, although she did nothing but destroy the American whaling and sealing fleet on the

northwest coast. Her total number of captures was thirty-six. What the cruisers did altogether might be told in a list of the American ships destroyed, but it is better to express the facts by saying that they literally swept the American flag from the sea. England was obliged to pay $15,000,000 for the aid she gave the Confederates in this work. As has

Whitworth Rifle Captured from the *Shenandoah*.

been said, "she got off cheap." What she failed to do when she sent shiploads of war material to help the Barbary pirates who were attacking American commerce, she accomplished entirely when she allowed the Confederate warships to fit out in her ports. She destroyed the only competitor on the high seas of whom she had any fear. Does any one doubt that she did it deliberately? From 1864 until this day in 1897 the maritime supremacy of Great Britain has been undisputed. She paid $15,000,000 in damages, and every year has collected in profits on the American carrying trade which she then secured—who

Florida. *Shenandoah.* *Alabama.*

Three Famous Confederate Cruisers.

From a painting by M. J. Burns.

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shall say how many times $15,000,000 her profits on the American carrying trade are? Perhaps if the reader will learn the answer to this question, he may make up his mind what the American people ought to do about it.

CHAPTER XV

THE *ALBEMARLE* AND CUSHING

A FORMIDABLE WARSHIP WAS BUILT UNDER REMARKABLE CONDITIONS TO ENABLE THE CONFEDERATES TO REGAIN CONTROL OF THE INLAND WATERS OF NORTH CAROLINA—VERY SUCCESSFUL AT FIRST, BUT SHE WAS LAID UP TO AWAIT THE BUILDING OF ANOTHER ONE, AND THEN CAME CUSHING WITH HIS LITTLE TORPEDO BOAT, AND THE CONFEDERATE HOPES WERE DESTROYED WITH THEIR SHIP.

THE loss of the control of the North Carolina sounds, as already told, proved more damaging to the Confederate forces than they realized at first, but they very soon began making efforts to establish themselves there once more, and the oftener they were defeated in their hopes the more determined they became. To tell the complete story of the skirmishes that took place between the Dismal Swamp and Newbern would be to give a hundred instances of the courage, enterprise, and persistence of the men on both sides. There was the case of John Taylor Wood, who, with a party of Confederates, boarded and destroyed the Union gunboat *Underwriter* under the eyes of the Union forces

afloat and ashore. As another instance, there is also the story of Cushing's trip up the New River Inlet with the *Ellis*, where he got into the wrong channel and had to destroy her, and then row in an open boat for a mile and a half under fire of the Confederates to escape. They were all brilliant, but none of them was decisive in any way.

Eventually it became apparent that no dashing exploit could restore Confederate supremacy there, and their hope was dying, when two flatboat-builders living at Edward's Ferry, on the Roanoke River, offered to build an ironclad, somewhat on the plan of the *Merrimac*, that should be able to navigate the shoal waters of the Sound and yet be invulnerable to the shot of the Union gunboats. Because the water at Hatteras Inlet was too shoal for any of the Union ironclads to pass, it was reasonable to suppose a well-built craft could clear the Union wooden gunboats from the waters of North Carolina.

The chief contractor for the boat that was, in accordance with these ideas, laid down at Edward's Ferry, was Mr. Gilbert Elliott. Naval Constructor John L. Porter, who had rebuilt the *Merrimac*, was sent to work out the plans, and Commander J. W. Cooke was appointed to gather the outfit and supervise the construction.

Work began on her in January, 1863. Her keels (she was flat-bottomed) were laid in a cornfield. A common country blacksmith shop was the only "machine shop." Her engines were put together from the scrap heaps of the iron works at Richmond and Wilmington. The timbers were from good pine logs, and her armor was like that of the *Merrimac*, but the ship, as a whole, excited the amusement even of many of the Confederates until she was afloat.

At this time the gunboats *Miami*, Capt. C. W. Flusser, and the *Southfield*, Captain French, were stationed at the west end of Albemarle Sound, rather in the mouth of Roanoke River, near Plymouth. Flusser, as early as June 8, 1863, sent to Rear-admiral S. P. Lee, then commanding the station, a very accurate description of the new ironclad. An expedition was sent up the river to destroy her on the ways, but it could not pass—at least it did not pass—the Confederate forts. Then an appeal was made to Gen. John G. Foster, commanding the Federal troops, to send a cavalry regiment to burn the ship, but "General Foster expressed his unconcern about the rebel ram." Sorrowful to relate, the vigilant Flusser, and not the self-satisfied Foster, suffered the penalty of this unconcern.

The *Albemarle* was "122 feet over all, had forty-five feet beam and drew eight feet of water. The casemate, built of massive pine timbers, covered with four-inch planking, was sixty feet long, and was covered with two layers of two-inch iron. The vessel was propelled by twin screws, operated by engines of 200 horse power each. She was armed with an Armstrong 100-pounder in the bow and one in the stern, while the casemate was so pierced that they could be used as broadside or quarter guns."

She was not ready for action, however, until April, 1864. On the 17th of that month the Confederate General Hoke advanced on Plymouth. Captain Cooke, of the *Albemarle*, had promised to coöperate in order to deprive the Union soldiers of the help of the Union gunboats. The *Albemarle* was not quite ready, but she left her moorings with the mechanics still at work screwing on her armor plates. While the foreman shouted orders to the mechanics, naval officers alongside were drilling the crew at great guns; and John N. Maffitt tells an amusing story of how the orders were mingled: "Drive in spike No. 10! Serve vent and sponge! On nut below and screw up! Load with cartridge!" And the fact that all this was done is especially interesting when we remember that the men equal

to such an occasion were the kind to win, and they did win in their first onslaught.

The Union forces had driven piles to keep her up the river, but, aided by high water, the *Albemarle* passed them with no delay whatever, and just before midnight, on April 19th, the Union gunboats found her upon them. The *Miami* and the *Southfield* had been yoked together with long booms and chains in such fashion that the *Albemarle* was expected to strike in between them and there get caught at such short range that their nine-inch Dahlgren projectiles would easily penetrate her armor. But instead of going between them, the *Albemarle* crossed the *Miami's* bow and rammed and sunk the *Southfield.* Flusser bravely worked his guns, but one shell that he himself fired against the *Albemarle's* side broke into pieces, which, rebounding back, killed him where he stood. Then the *Miami* fled and Plymouth surrendered.

On May 5th the *Albemarle* had another fight with a squadron gathered to disable her. She was rammed by the *Sassacus.* The blow hurt the *Sassacus* more than the ironclad, and a few shot from the *Albemarle's* guns sent the Union ship adrift and almost unmanageable. She would have been entirely so but for a heroic engineer who kept her engine going in spite of escaping steam in the engine-room.

The *Whitehead*, the *Mattabesett*, and the *Wyalusing* also took part, firing as rapidly as possible. The action is described in one history as a "desperate battle." The casualties on the Union side in this desperate affair amounted to four killed, twelve wounded by projectiles, and fourteen scalded by steam from a cut pipe. The hero of the battle was Engineer J. M. Hobby, who stood at his post on the *Sassacus* in spite of the scalding steam when every other man fled, and so saved the ship.

William B. Cushing.
From a photograph.

Thereafter the *Albemarle* was tied up at the Plymouth wharf to await the completion of another ship like her that was building on Tar River, and this needless delay was fatal, for Lieut. William B. Cushing asked for, and obtained, the task of destroying her, and he was of the kind that succeed.

Cushing, after serving as a cadet nearly four years at the Naval Academy, resigned on

March 21, 1861—just why has never been told. In May he entered the navy once more. He was made a master's mate, and by July, 1862, had obtained a lieutenant's commission through repeated "acts of successful daring." He was with Rowan at Elizabeth City, and obtained command of the *Ellis*, captured there. His courage, combined with good judgment, continued to keep him in the eyes of his superior officers. He was constantly looking for something to do, and when he offered to destroy the *Albemarle* he was allowed to try.

At about this time Engineer John L. Lay, U. S. N., had devised a torpedo boat that consisted of a light steam launch rigged to carry a torpedo at the end of a long spar—a torpedo that might be placed against a ship's side and fired by means of a string that led from the trigger of the torpedo to the launch's bow. It would be considered a crude affair now, for the man operating the torpedo had to stand erect in the bow of the launch, wholly unprotected even from musketry. Two of these little boats were built in New York, and Cushing carried one of them through inland waters to Albemarle Sound, Norfolk being then in Federal hands. Admiral Ammen, in his history, complains that "the newspapers had gratuitously furnished the enemy with information" about all the movements of Cushing, "as

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well as the avowed object of destroying the *Albemarle*." The writer hereof was not a reporter in those days, but he imagines that some naval officer told the reporters where Cushing was going before the destination was announced in any newspaper; though the matter is important only as a warning to naval officers not to tell vital secrets to reporters. As to the effect of this publicity, the Confederates put double lines of pickets along the river below Plymouth, stationed 1,000 soldiers about the wharf, built a boom of cypress logs around the *Albemarle* at such a distance that no torpedo spar could reach over it to the hull, and kept the sentries on board, pacing to and fro at night, constantly on the lookout, while an outpost was established in the river on the wreck of the sunken *Southfield*, one mile down-stream.

It was in the month of October, 1864, that Cushing brought his boat to the waters below Plymouth, and on the night of the 26th the gunboat *Otsego* towed the launch to the mouth of the river, where Cushing cast off, and with a ship's cutter loaded with armed men in tow of his launch, he started up the river. The cutter's men were to land at the outpost, on the old wreck, if necessary, and care for the Confederates there, while the steam launch was to be driven at full speed to the *Albemarle*, a mile

away. But luck was against the expedition. The launch grounded, and before she could be gotten afloat day was at hand, and Cushing returned to the *Otsego*.

And then came the night of the 27th. There were thirteen officers and men in the launch with Cushing, besides the cutter load in tow. It was a dark night, and with no light and with his machinery working in perfect silence, Cushing steamed up the river. Cushing himself stood in the bow, steering—wheel in hand, with a loaded howitzer on one side ready for firing, and with the gear for working the torpedo on the other. There were two schooners beside the old wreck; but the sentinels failed to see Cushing, and wholly unobserved, he arrived opposite the well-guarded ironclad, and then for the first time learned that the boom was so far out from the ship that the torpedo could not reach her.

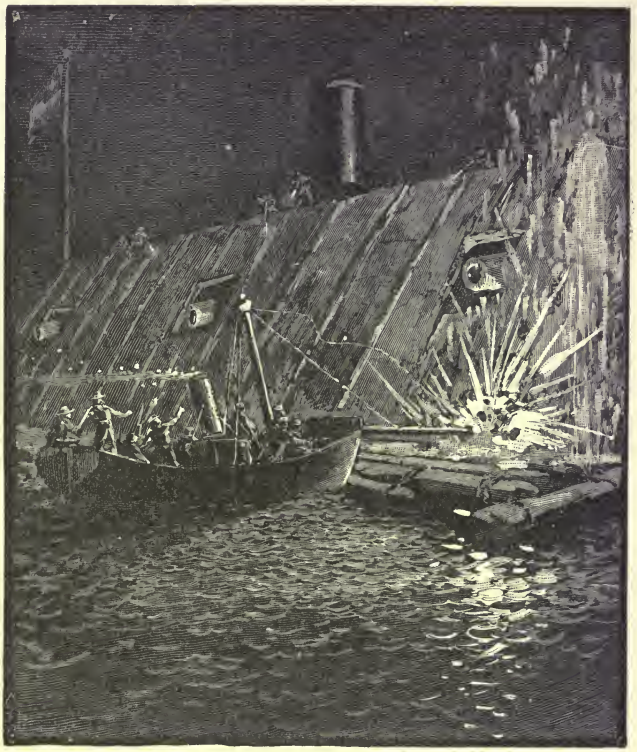
For a moment Cushing thought to land, walk boldly on board, and strive to carry her out into the stream. But even as the thought came to him he was discovered by the sentinels on shore, and a hail was heard.

"Boat ahoy!" followed almost instantly by a musket-shot, and then by a rattling fire from an uncounted line of sentinels up and down the shore and on the ship. A huge bonfire of fat pine knots blazed up to illuminate the

shore, and the call of the ship's crew to quarters arose on the air.

To the mind of any other man than a Cushing the expedition was a failure, but casting off the cutter with orders to pull for life, Cushing turned his launch out into the stream, swung her around in a wide circle to give her full speed, and then headed straight at the log-boom abreast of the fated ram. A host of Confederates gathered on the ram's deck to beat him off. Two howitzers loaded with canister, and a score of muskets, were fired at him, and a man by his side fell, but Cushing with his own well-aimed howitzer scattered the Confederate host. And then the sled-runner bow of the launch struck the half-submerged boom, rose with the impetus, and over she went with her bow half under water, but inside the boom. The muzzle of a hundred-pounder was shoved out through the *Albemarle's* broadside port, directly in front of the launch, but Cushing drove the torpedo under the hull of the iron-clad, raised it up until he felt it strike her bottom, and then, as the Confederates fired their big gun, he pulled the trigger. A dull roar from beneath the ship answered to the crash of the broadside gun. The charge of the gun flew over the heads of the launch's crew, but the torpedo opened wide the hull of the *Albemarle*, and down she went.

The huge wave thrown up by the torpedo swept over the bow of the little launch, and she, too, sank. Even then the fortitude



Cushing Blowing up the *Albemarle*.

and resourcefulness of Cushing preserved him. Plunging into the river, he swam away unhurt and reached the swampy shore below, utterly exhausted. There he lay in the water until

day was breaking, when he crawled into the woods and hid himself. While lying there he heard two men talking as they walked in an alongshore path, and learned how complete had been his work. During the day he found one of the enemy's picket-boats, and that night he paddled his way off to the *Valley City*, where he arrived at 11 o'clock at night.

He was only a boy—he was but twenty-one years old—but no man, old or young, has ever surpassed him. He was officially complimented by the Secretary of the Navy, and this was the fifth time that the department had "had the gratification of expressing its approbation" of his conduct. He had said when leaving the *Otsego*, "another stripe or a coffin," and he got the stripe. But no gold medal was voted to him. Gold was at a premium in those days —so high a premium, apparently, that Congress could not afford it. The writer does not mean to carp, but to deplore the fact that men who during the Civil War showed the most magnificent qualities of mind did not receive every recognition possible. For it is the men who write rank with a capital R that make and save the nation.

It is comforting to note that of the launch's crew but two were killed, though all the rest were captured except Cushing and one other. The following is a list of the crew:

"William B. Cushing, Lieutenant, commanding expedition, escaped; William L. Howarth, Acting-Master's Mate, picket-boat; William Stotesbury, Acting-Third-Assistant Engineer, picket-boat; John Woodman, Acting-Master's Mate, U. S. S. *Commodore Hull*, drowned; Thomas S. Gay, Acting-Master's Mate, U. S. S. *Otsego;* Charles S. Heener, Acting-Third-Assistant Engineer, U. S. S. *Otsego;* Francis H. Swan, Acting-Assistant Paymaster, U. S. S. *Otsego;* Edward T. Horton, ordinary seaman, U. S. S. *Chicopee*, escaped; Bernard Harley, ordinary seaman, U. S. S. *Chicopee;* William Smith, ordinary seaman, U. S. S. *Chicopee;* Richard Hamilton, coalheaver, U. S. S. *Shamrock;* R. H. King, landsman, picket-boat; —— Wilkes, landsman, picket-boat; —— Demming, landsman, picket-boat; Samuel Higgins, first-class fireman, picket-boat, drowned."

Cushing became a commander in 1872, and he was then the youngest man of the rank. He died of brain fever at Washington in 1874. He was tall (six feet) and slender, and, as his portrait shows, looked more like a poet than a warrior. And the student of history who reads his dispatches will say that he was both.

With the destruction of the *Albemarle* the hope of the Confederates fled. But two seaports remained to them—Charleston and Wilmington.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NAVY AT CHARLESTON

IT WAS A WELL-GUARDED HARBOR, AND THE CHANNEL WAS LONG AND CROOKED—THE "STONE FLEET" AND THE ATTITUDE OF FOREIGN POWERS—BRIEF CAREER OF TWO CONFEDERATE IRONCLADS—THE BLOCKADE WAS NOT RAISED—A CONFEDERATE CRUISER BURNED—UTTER FAILURE OF THE IRONCLAD ATTACKS ON THE FORTS—CAPTURE OF THE CONFEDERATE WARSHIP *ATLANTA*—"BOARDERS AWAY" AT FORT SUMTER—MAGNIFICENT BRAVERY OF THE MEN WHO MANNED THE CONFEDERATE TORPEDO BOATS.

WHEN the student of American history turns from the stories of the battles of New Orleans and Mobile to that of the naval efforts to reduce Charleston, he is driven to a conclusion that may be expressed by saying there was only one Farragut in the Civil War. He may easily believe that both Dupont and Dahlgren were great men, but their absolute failures before Charleston simply emphasize the fact that Farragut earned the place he has held in the hearts of his countrymen.

The chart of Charleston harbor in these days is somewhat misleading to a careless reader of history, because the channel now used

Charleston Harbor.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

by shipping runs straight out to sea, while the channel used in the days of the war is comparatively shoal, and is used by coasters only.

In the time of the war a ship bound into Charleston must needs sail in toward the coast several miles south of the harbor, the exact point to be steered for being marked by a tall lighthouse. Arriving within half a mile or so of the beach, the ship turned to the north and followed along the shore of Morris Island, which terminates in a long sandy point called Cumming's Point, very much like Sandy Hook of New York harbor. Above Cumming's Point the channel swept away to the northwest until Fort Sumter was reached, when it turned still further to the west, passing Forts Ripley and Pinckney, and then the piers were reached.

The Union warships had to face earthworks from the moment they arrived within range of the tall lighthouse. There were, early in the war, guns at intervals all the way from Light House Inlet to Cumming's Point, guns laid with muzzles out to sea and commanding the channel along the shore of Morris Island. The chief of these batteries was called Fort Wagner, and it stood on the beach about three miles north of the lighthouse, or say a mile south of Cumming's Point; but there was another good work (Fort Gregg) on Cumming's Point, and even before that was passed a ship came in range of Fort Beauregard and Fort Moultrie over on the north side of the harbor (Sullivan's Island), and, later, of Fort Sumter,

on an island midway between the north and south shores of the harbor, and of Fort Johnson, lying on the south side of the harbor. There were other earthworks about the harbor, and the two little island forts of Ripley and

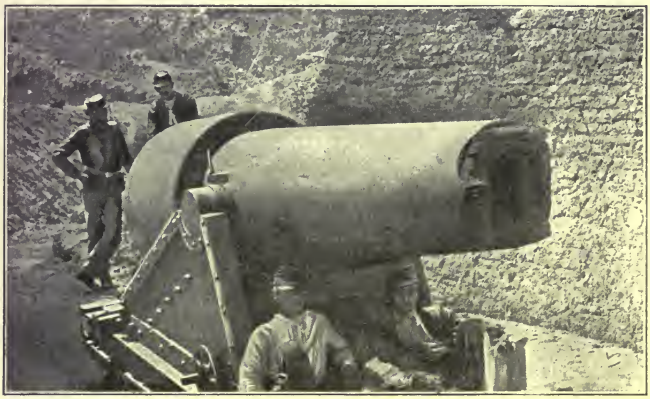
Battery Brown: Twenty-eight-inch Parrott Rifle.

From a photograph by Haas & Peale.

Pinckney ought, perhaps, to be considered, although they did nothing of consequence in the fighting.

These forts were armed during the attack made upon them on April 7, 1863, with the following guns that could bear upon the ships: Ten ten-inch smooth-bores, three nine-inch

smooth-bores, two eight-inch rifles, nineteen eight-inch smooth-bores, eight thirty-two-pounder rifles, eighteen thirty-two-pounder smooth-bores, and ten ten-inch mortars. No detailed account is given of the landward bearing guns of these forts, but it may be said that the forts on Morris Island and James Island



In the Charleston Batteries: 300-pounder Parrott Rifle after Bursting of Nozzle.

From a photograph by Haas & Peale.

were well fitted to repel troops, while the harbor forts Moultrie and Sumter had nothing of account bearing toward the inner part of the harbor.

In addition to the forts, there were a lot of torpedoes, beginning in the channel off Fort Wagner and continuing around to a line of logs and chains stretched from Fort Sumter across the channel to Sullivan's Island. It

makes the gray-haired men of Charleston smile, in these days, when these channel obstructions are mentioned; for, as Bishop John Johnson —he who wrote "The Defence of Charleston Harbor," a work that is entirely fair and most interesting—said to the writer: "The *moral* effect of these obstructions was excellent—excellent." And so it was.

The first thing of importance done in Charleston harbor after establishing the blockade was in the line of strengthening the blockade, and not an attempt to reduce the city. This was the sinking of the "Stone Fleet." On December 20, 1861, twenty old hulks of ships, well loaded with stone, were sunk in the channels. The importance of this work is found only in the fact that it brought out conspicuously the exact attitude of the British government toward that of the United States.

Let the reader observe, first of all, that the hulks were "so disposed as to obstruct navigation without impeding the flow of water." They were "intended to establish at Charleston a combination of artificial interruptions resembling on a small scale those of Hell Gate or Holmes Hole, and producing, like them, eddies, whirlpools and counter currents, such as to render the navigation of an otherwise difficult channel hazardous and uncertain." The last quotation is from a letter from Lord

Lyons at Washington to the British Prime Minister.

Whether a nation has a right to close permanently a channel of commerce wholly within its own borders is a question that has never been decided by any international court, or any writer on international law, for that matter. At any rate, it is quite certain that if England chose to dam permanently a harbor as a war measure, she would not receive in kindly spirit any interference from a foreign power. But the fact is that the "Stone Fleet" was not sunk in Charleston's channels with any idea that the hulks would "permanently injure" the harbor. It was well known to engineers in England, as well as in the United States, that when tidal currents over such sands as those at Charleston were interrupted in one place, they would cut new channels. It was further well known that these obstructions could be removed readily whenever there was need of doing so. With these facts in mind, the following extract from a letter of instructions written by Lord Russell to Lord Lyons about the "permanent" closing of Charleston harbor is of interest:

"Such a cruel plan would seem to imply despair of the restoration of the Union, the professed object of the war; for it never could be the wish of the United States government

to destroy cities from which their own country was to derive a portion of its riches and prosperity. Such a plan could only be adopted as a measure of revenge and of irremediable injury against an enemy. Lord Lyons was further told that even as a scheme of embittered and sanguinary war such a measure would not be justifiable. It would be a plot against the commerce of all maritime nations, and against the free intercourse of the Southern States of America with the civilized world."

The protest of France was of the same tenor, and when the French Chambers and the British Parliament met in January and February, 1862, the subject was vehemently discussed.

This was one of the first of a series of attempts made by the British government to aid in the destruction of the Union—a series that did not end until the United States laid the keels of a fleet of ships of which the *Wampanoag* was the type—ships that could carry a few one-hundred-pounder rifles and steam at the then unequalled rate of seventeen knots per hour. That the British government became friendly after the trial trip of the *Wampanoag* had been described in print is one of the most instructive incidents in the history of the American navy. If it be coupled with the facts that before the building of the modern

Yankee White Squadron the British government refused even to consider a proposition for a general arbitration treaty between the two English-speaking nations, and that since the efficiency of the Yankee ships has been demonstrated the British were particularly in favor of such a treaty, the incident proves—but let the candid reader consider this matter in all its bearings for himself. The hull of the *Wampanoag* was designed by Constructor Delano, and the machinery by Engineer Isherwood. And it is written, "Blessed are the peacemakers."

For a year after the sinking of the Stone Fleet the Union squadron off Charleston did nothing but the tedious work of interrupting commerce. During this time the Confederates, although Charleston had had nothing in the semblance of a shipyard, had been building two ironclads there, called the *Palmetto State* and the *Chicora*. Commodore D. N. Ingraham supervised the work. They were from plans by John L. Porter, the enterprising constructor of the *Merrimac*, and they were somewhat like her, though but 150 feet long by thirty-five broad, with a draft of twelve feet. They had the same kind of iron armor, backed by twenty-two inches of wood, and their guns included sixty-pounder and eighty-pounder rifles and some larger shell guns.

The plating covered the ram-shaped bows, and was continued five feet below the water-line.

On the morning of January 31, 1863, the warships *Housatonic*, *Ottawa*, and *Unadilla*, with the armed merchantmen *Mercedita*, *Keystone State*, *Quaker City*, *Memphis*, *Augusta*, *Stettin*, and *Flag* were lying at wide intervals off Charleston harbor. There was a heavy fog lying low on the water. At 4.30 o'clock a ship suddenly appeared in the mists abeam of the *Mercedita*, Capt. Henry S. Stellwagen. The officer of the deck on the Union ship, manifestly believing the stranger was one of the blockading force, shouted:

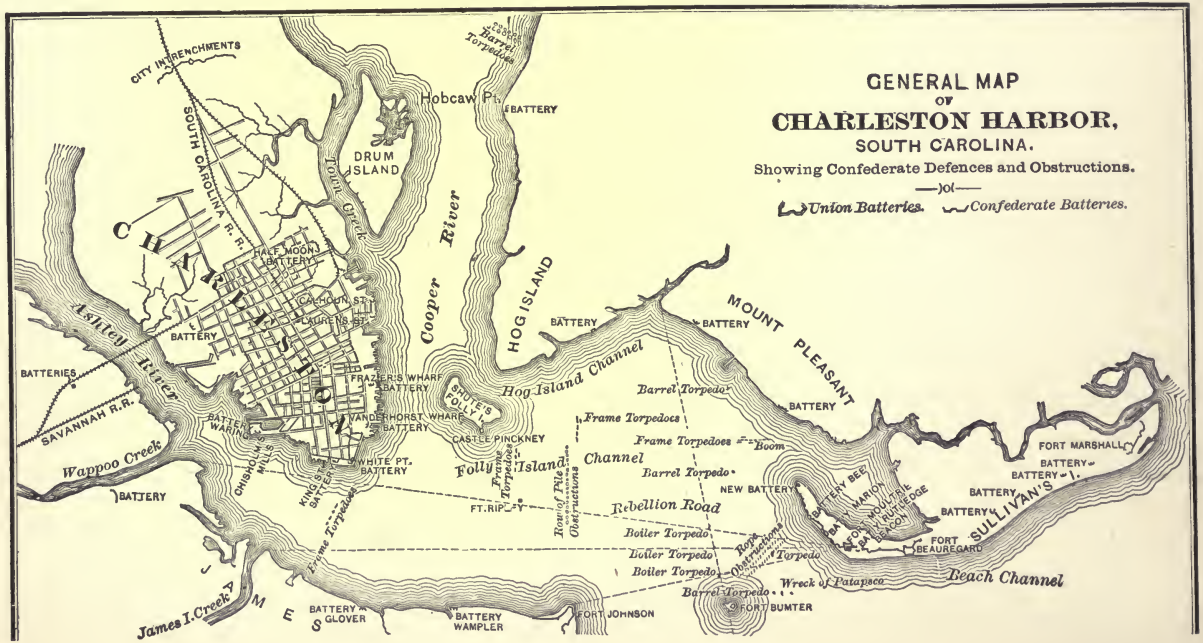
"What steamer is that? Drop your anchor or you will be into us!" The reply that came was startling. It was made by Commodore Ingraham, and he said:

"The Confederate States steamer *Palmetto State*," and he emphasized the answer with a shell that killed one man, cut through the condenser and the steam-drum above one of the *Mercedita's* boilers, and then exploded just short of the further side of the steamer, tearing a great hole in her side near the water-line. The shot and escaping steam killed four, and as many more were scalded. They were at the mercy of the ironclad, and they believed the ship was sinking. When the Confederates demanded that the *Mercedita* surrender, Lieut.

T. Abbott was sent in a small boat to the *Palmetto State*, where he gave a parole for all the members of his crew.

This done, Commodore Ingraham left the *Mercedita* alone, and went hunting other blockaders. Meantime the *Chicora* found the *Keystone State*, Capt. William E. LeRoy. A shell was fired at the *Chicora*, Capt. J. R. Tucker, and the Confederates returned it with a shot that set the *Keystone State* on fire, and she steered away in the fog to escape until she had extinguished the fire, when she turned toward a black smoke, intending to ram the vessel making it. It proved to be a Confederate ship cruising in the fog for blockaders, but the *Keystone State* failed to ram her. Worse yet, the Confederate projectiles cut the *Keystone State's* steam-pipes and pierced her below the water-line. It was an ironclad against a frail merchant ship, and there could be but one result. The merchant ship surrendered. She had lost twenty killed and as many wounded before she did so.

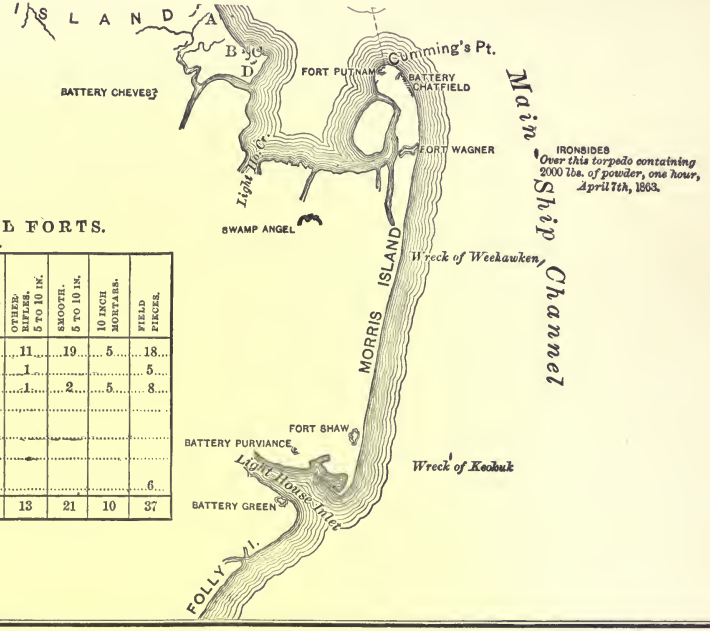
Meantime the *Palmetto*, Commodore Ingraham, had been cruising about and exchanging shots with some other ships of the blockading squadron, but they being of superior speed, easily avoided her, according to the Confederate accounts. The Union reports say that the *Unadilla* and *Housatonic* came to


GENERAL MAP
OF
CHARLESTON HARBOR,
SOUTH CAROLINA.
Showing Confederate Defences and Obstructions.
Union Batteries.
Confederate Batteries.
CITY INTRENCHMENTS
SOUTH CAROLINA R. R.
DRUM ISLAND
Town Creek
Hobcaw Pt.
BATTERY
Cooper River
HOG ISLAND
MOUNT PLEASANT
HALF MOON BATTERY
CALHOUN ST.
LAURENS ST.
BATTERY
CHARLESTON
Ashley River
BATTERIES
SAVANNAH R.R.
FRAZIER'S WHARF BATTERY
SNIPE'S POINT
VANDERHORST WHARF BATTERY
CASTLE PINCKNEY
BATTERY WARING
Wappoo Creek
CHISHOLM MILLS
WHITE PT. BATTERY
KING'S BATTERY
BATTERY
Hog Island Channel
Barrel Torpedo
Frame Torpedoes
Boom
Folly Island
Channel
Frame Torpedoes
Barrel Torpedo
NEW BATTERY
Rebellion Road
FT. RIP-RAP
Boom of Pile Obstructions
Boiler Torpedo
Boiler Torpedo
Boiler Torpedo
Rock Obstructions
Torpedo
Wreck of Patapsco
Barrel Torpedo
FORT SUMTER
Beach Channel
BATTERY BEE
MARION
MOULTRIE
RUTLEDGE
LEGARE
FORT BEAUREGARD
FORT MARSHALL
BATTERY
BATTERY
BATTERY
SULLIVAN'S
James I. Creek
J A M E S
BATTERY GLOVER
BATTERY WAMPLER
FORT JOHNSON

ARMAMENT OF REBEL FORTS.

FEBRUARY 18TH, 1865.

FORTS AND BATTERIES.	DAHLGREN. XI. IN.	COLUMBIADS, SMOOTH. 8 TO 11 IN.	COLUMBIADS. RIFLED. 8 AND 10 IN.	BROOKS. RIFLES. 7, 8, 9, 10 IN.	BLACKELEY'S. RIFLES. 13 IN.	OTHER RIFLES. 5 TO 10 IN.	SMOOTH. 5 TO 10 IN.	10 INCH MORTARS.	FIELD PIECES.
Sullivan's I.	1	19	2	6		11	19	5	18
Sumter		2		2		1			5
James I.		9	3	5		1	2	5	8
Mt. Pleasant				2					
Castle Pinckney		3		1					
City Batteries	1	7		3	2				
City Intrenchment									6
	2	40	5	19	2	13	21	10	37



attack her instead of running. In any event, the two Confederates had accomplished everything possible in compelling the surrender of the two Union ships. They could not even take the surrendered ships into port. "I knew that our only opportunity was to take the enemy unawares, as the moment he was under way, from his superior speed, we could not close with him," says Ingraham in his report. He therefore "led the way to the beach channel." He did not make any attempt to carry either of the surrendered vessels with him. The two Confederate ships started for home at 7.30, according to Tucker's official report, "leaving the partially crippled and fleeing enemy about *seven miles clear of the bar*, standing to the southward and eastward."

However, when the *Cossack*, with the 176th Pennsylvania militia on board, reached the bar at 8.30 o'clock, it found all but two or three of the blockading squadron in the usual places, as her officers and the officers of the regiment testified. Neither the *Unadilla* nor the *Housatonic* had passed beyond the usual line of blockade. No blockade-runner passed in or out during the fight, and, according to Tucker's report, the retreating rams anchored under the shore batteries at 8 o'clock. And that was the only service rendered by these rams.

All this is important only because Robert

Bunce, the British consular agent; Baron de St. Andre, consul for France, and Señor Francisco Moncada, consul for Spain, "at a joint conference concurred in the opinion that the blockade had been legally raised." Wilson, the British author of "Ironclads in Action," says of the surrender of the *Mercedita:*

"The ram, without stopping to take possession, ran north, and the *Mercedita's* captain promptly rehoisted his flag. This very questionable proceeding he could scarcely justify on any grounds."

There is nothing in any report on either side to show that the flag was "promptly" rehoisted. There is nothing to show that Ingraham had any idea of taking possession of the *Mercedita.* In fact, he had no such idea. Scharf's "Confederate States Navy" says (and, fortunately for this occasion, Scharf is a violent partisan rather than a historian) that "other vessels of the fleet assisted her to Port Royal for repairs."

The Confederates followed this success by capturing the gunboat *Isaac Smith* in the Stono River, where, when scouting, she got among the Confederate batteries. Then the Union forces had a turn of good luck. The Confederate cruiser *Nashville* had been lying blockaded for a long time in the Great Ogeechee River. Fort McAllister guarded the

river, and a line of piles prevented a dash past the fort, but Capt. John L. Worden, who commanded the *Monitor*, took a new monitor, the *Montauk*, to the line of piles, on February 28th, and while four other Union vessels fired on the fort, Worden shelled the *Nashville* at a range of 1,200 yards. The fort gunners kept up a furious but wild fire on Worden's boat, but he got the range and burned the cruiser. Worden was always at least as proud of this event as he was of his fight with the *Merrimac*, and he had a right to be, for the marksmanship of his gunners was very much better on this occasion.

After all this preliminary work came the first serious attack on the Charleston defences.

"The order of battle was as follows: The *Weehawken*, Capt. John Rodgers, with a raft on the bows to explode torpedoes, led the line; the *Passaic*, Capt. Percival Drayton; the *Montauk*, Capt. John L. Worden; the *Patapsco*, Commander Daniel Ammen; the *New Ironsides*, Commodore Thomas Turner (as flagship), followed by the *Catskill*, Commander George W. Rodgers; the *Nantucket*, Commander D. M. Fairfax; the *Nahant*, Commander John Downes, and the *Keokuk*, Commander A. C. Rhind.

"The vessels were ordered to pass without returning the fire from batteries on Morris

Ironclads and Monitors Bombarding the Defences at Charleston.

From an engraving.

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Island ; when within easy range of Fort Sumter they were to open upon it, and take position to the north and west, at a distance of 800 yards, firing low, and at the centre embrasure. The necessity for precision of fire was enjoined."

Of these nine ships the *New Ironsides* was a big broadside steamer with heavy iron plating, and she carried two 150-pounder rifles and fourteen eleven-inch Dahlgrens. The *Keokuk* was a sort of monitor with two fixed turrets, and the others were new monitors carrying one fifteen-inch Dahlgren, the solid shot of which weighed 440 pounds, and one eleven-inch Dahlgren, save only that the *Patapsco* carried a 150-pounder rifle in place of the smaller Dahlgren.

On April 7th this formidable squadron steamed up the channel. They did not get started until 1.15 P.M. because of the fouling of the big raft that was expected to serve as a torpedo-catcher in front of the leading monitor (*Weehawken*), but at 2.50 o'clock the squadron was within range of Fort Moultrie, and the Confederates opened fire. It was a battle in enclosed water—the Confederate gunners had the range marked to a yard with colored buoys, and the fire was hot from the first gun. But the squadron steamed slowly on until within about 1,000 yards of Fort Sumter. There is

a clash of authorities as to the exact distance, but the point is of no consequence because it is certain that the distance of the ships was in no case less than 800 yards from Sumter. At 3.05 the ship at the head of the line opened fire. "A fifteen-inch shell fired at Sumter was watched until it struck on the northeast face; the fort was covered with a mass of dust from the bursting shell." So says Ammen, and that tells the whole story of the effect of the attack. It kicked up a mighty dust. Some of the ships, including the flagship, became unmanageable. "Disregard motions of flagship" was signalled by Admiral Dupont, commanding. The ships were in a turmoil because of the tidal currents and the difficulty of seeing through the peep-holes and through the smoke. But they did not try to pass into the harbor and attack the forts in the rear. Capt. John Rodgers, of the *Weehawken*, in his report, tells why for himself and all the squadron:

"We approached very close to the obstructions extending from Fort Sumter to Fort Moultrie—as near, indeed, as I could get without running upon them. They were marked by rows of casks very near together. To the eye they appeared almost to touch one another, and there was more than one line of them.

"The *appearance was so formidable* that,

upon deliberate judgment, I thought it right not to entangle the vessel in obstructions which I did not think we could have passed through."

The obstructions were really of no account, and there was, moreover, an opening through them.

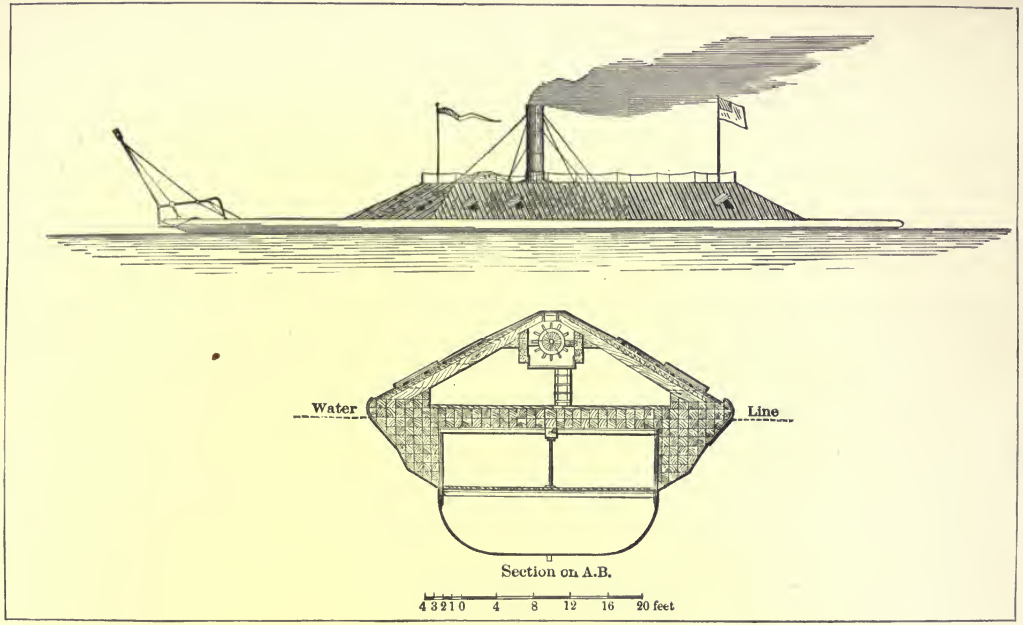
"After braving the fire of sixty-nine guns for about an hour, the ironclads retired, some of them seriously injured. The *Keokuk* had drifted much nearer than she intended to do. She was struck ninety times in thirty minutes, and nineteen shots pierced her armor." "In short, the vessel was completely riddled." She went down next day. The *Nahant* was disabled for one day, and was not in good order for a month. The *New Ironsides* was for a long time over an electrical torpedo containing 3,000 pounds of powder, but the firing apparatus had been improperly adjusted, and she escaped. The Confederates thought she escaped through treachery, and it is said they executed the man in charge. The Confederate ironclads had no part in this battle. And the Confederates had fewer guns than at Mobile.

Dupont wrote regarding this attack: "During the few minutes that we were under the heaviest fire of the batteries, half of our turret-ships were in part, or wholly, disabled. We

have only encountered the outer line of defence, and if we force our way into the harbor, we have not men to occupy any fort we may take, and we can have no communication with our force outside except by running the gauntlet. . . . We have met with a sad repulse; I shall not turn it into a great disaster."

Chief Engineer A. C. Stimers, who had been in the original *Monitor*, was so disgusted with the result of the battle that he could not help expressing his opinion forcibly in Dupont's presence. He was court-martialled and acquitted. There was no Caldwell to break the chain running from Sumter to Moultrie, and there was no Farragut to plan to go in, as at Mobile, where he believed that six of his squadron must be sacrificed to make the passage, or to say "Damn the torpedoes!" when once the start was made.

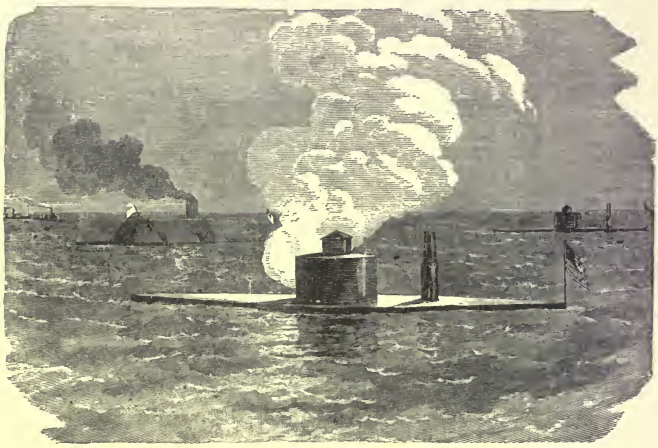
In June a couple of Dupont's monitors had a successful fight with another Confederate ironclad. She was originally a thirteen-knot iron steamer called the *Fingal*, a Scotch boat. Having run the blockade at Savannah, she was cut down and decked over, and a casemate was erected in the favorite fashion of John L. Porter. But she was broadened out with solid timbers bolted outside the hull until she had sides seven feet thick at the water-line. Her armor-plates were the same



Confederate Ironclad *Atlanta*, Captured at Wassaw Sound, June 17, 1863.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

as the *Merrimac* carried except that they were not of such good metal, and the wood backing of the armor was but eighteen inches thick, although the power of the fifteen-inch guns she would have to face was well known. She carried four of the excellent Brooke guns so



The *Weehawken* and the *Atlanta*.
From a wood-cut.

mounted that they could fire ahead or in broadside. The speed of the ship was reduced by the weight to eight knots. She was named the *Atlanta*, and was commanded by Lieut. William A. Webb.

On June 17, 1863, she came down the Wilmington River, where the *Weehawken* and the *Nahant* were waiting for her. Several excur-

sion steamers brought big loads of people to see her whip the monitors.

She opened fire on the *Weehawken* at a range of a mile and a half, and fired, in all, eight shots, of which not one hit the monitor. The *Weehawken* replied when at a range of 300 yards. The shot pierced the *Atlanta's* casemate, and wounded sixteen men with splinters. The next shot from the monitor struck the *Atlanta's* pilot-house, wounding both pilots and both wheelsmen. Three more shots were fired with less effect, but it was seen that the two monitors could shoot her to pieces, and Webb hauled down his flag. The action had lasted fifteen minutes.

John A. B. Dahlgren.
From a photograph.

Admiral John A. B. Dahlgren, whose name is familiar as a designer of great guns, relieved Dupont on July 6, 1863. The Union forces under General Gillmore were landed on the lower end of Morris Island, and Gillmore and Dahlgren planned a combined attack on Fort

Wagner. It was made on the 10th. "At 9.30 the monitors opened on the work. The Admiral desired to get within grape-shot range, but was not able to get closer than about 1,200 yards, by reason of shoal water. The fire was promptly and vigorously returned till noon, when the monitors dropped down to allow the men to have dinner, after which they re-occupied their position and continued firing until 6 P.M., and then withdrew, the men having been fourteen hours employed. The weather was excessively hot. Five hundred and thirty-four shell and shrapnel were fired during the day."

There were then ten or twelve guns on the seaward side of Wagner; but as Ammen says of Dupont's attack on Sumter, "the effect of the fire of the vessels on the fort was not so observable as that of the enemy on the vessels." The troops were also repulsed. On August 17, 1863, Gillmore was able to open on Sumter from land batteries, and Dahlgren, with four monitors and the *New Ironsides*, attacked Wagner, while seven gunboats used their pivots on the fort at long range. Late in the day Dahlgren, with the *Passaic* and *Patapsco* (monitors), went within 2,000 yards of Sumter. Wagner was silenced, but Fort Gregg kept up a steady fire. Commander George W. Rodgers, a favorite in the navy,

was killed on the *Catskill* in this fight. The walls of Sumter were damaged somewhat by the monitor fire.

On August 23d five monitors opened on Sumter at a range of 800 yards. Dahlgren

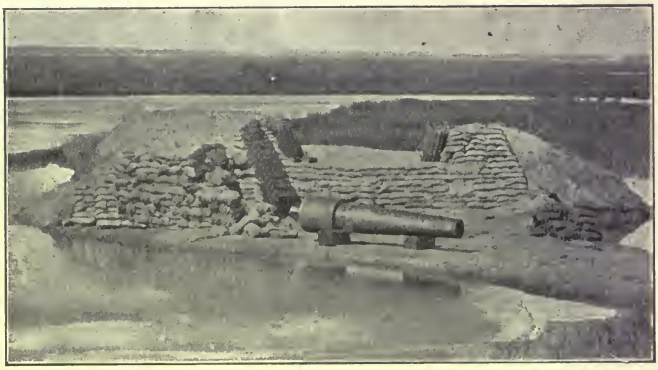
Bomb-proof of Fort Wagner.

From a photograph by Haas & Peale.

wrote to the department that morning: "I propose passing Sumter into the harbor, if the obstructions are not of such a nature as to prevent it," and adds that "the gorge of Sumter has been completely ruined" by Union batteries on shore, of which one of four guns was

worked by naval men. But he did not make the attempt to pass the fort, and never did.

Meantime Gillmore had been pushing forward the parallels—rolling waves of sand toward Fort Wagner, and the Confederates were hard pressed, but a truce for an exchange of prisoners (the Union forces did not know how



Battery Hayes: Eighteen-inch Parrott Rifle—Dismounted Breaching Battery against Sumter.

From a photograph by Haas & Peale.

badly the Confederates were pressed) gave the garrison a chance to rebuild their defences. On September 2d Dahlgren reports that the monitors were within 500 yards of Sumter during the night before. "The firing was steadily maintained." Sumter returned two shots only. "Our fire was also directed at the floating obstructions that had been reported from day to day." "The vessels were engaged five

hours." Of night attacks Beauregard, the Confederate general, said:

"This plan of attack could have been repeated every night until the walls of the fort should have crumbled under the enormous missiles which made holes two and a half feet deep in the walls, and shattered the latter in

Battery Kirby: Twenty-eight-inch Seacoast Mortars against Sumter.

From a photograph by Haas & Peale.

an alarming manner. I could not then have repaired during the day the damages of the night, and I am confident now, as I was then, that Fort Sumter, if thus attacked, must have been disabled."

No attempt to pass the silenced Sumter was made. In fact, Sumter was, at the last, reduced to a wreck. It became a mere infantry post. On the night of September 6th Fort

Wagner was evacuated by the Confederates. The Union soldiers were gaining ground. The navy planned an expedition to carry Sumter by storm. Commander Thomas Holdup Stevens was placed in charge. In all, 400 men, sailors and marines, were put into small boats. But a lookout on the Confederate side was able to read the "wigwag" signals by which the orders were transmitted between the ships. So says Johnson. Of course the Confederates were ready when the force came. All who landed on the fort, including ten officers and 104 men, were taken prisoners, and three men were killed. These were the men who led. The men in the rear were able to get off. It was the most courageous deed on the Union side before Charleston. It was worthy of Farragut, who planned to take the castle at Vera Cruz, during the Mexican War, by laying the ships alongside, tricing up ladders and calling away boarders. So the Confederates were allowed to hold the wreck of the famous fort in comparative peace until Sherman, in his famous march through the Confederate States, got into the rear of Charleston, when the city and all the forts were abandoned.

Wilson's "Ironclads in Action" has this to say of the Union naval operations against Charleston:

"Never before had ships so invulnerable

been in action, and probably never again will so many hits be inflicted with such trivial damage and such slight loss of life. If the impenetrable monitor could do nothing against forts garrisoned by resolute men and efficiently armed, what hope of success could our *Royal Sovereigns* or *Majestics* have? Artillery has progressed so much that cannon can be mounted on land which can pierce armour thicker than any ship can hope to carry. Considerations of weight and displacement limit the protection which can be given to the ship, whilst they have no such determining influence on the fort. The ironclad's armour and ordnance then are limited; the fort's unlimited. How can the two fight on an equal footing? There are these further considerations, too, to be taken into account. The guns must be crowded into a limited space on board ship, where several may be silenced by a single lucky shot. In the fort a wide space can intervene between each weapon, and if properly mounted, each gun must be actually struck before it is put out of action. Then, too, the fort's fire can be directed upon the ship's water-line; hits here will be every whit as efficacious as upon her battery, and she can be driven off without a single one of her guns being struck. Thus a close attack by ships upon forts has become almost impossible, though it is beyond

doubt perfectly feasible for war vessels to run through an unobstructed channel, commanded by forts however numerous."

However, the story of naval affairs before

Admiral Dahlgren and Staff on the *Pawnee* at Charleston.

From a photograph.

Charleston by no means ended with the failure of the attacks on the forts; for what the Union forces suffered at the hands of the daring Confederate topedo-men is quite as interesting and as instructive as anything done afloat during the war.

The Confederates had organized a submarine torpedo corps, and the leading man of the corps at Charleston was Capt. F. D. Lee of the engineers. A part of the work done under his supervision was the building of a number of small torpedo boats now known to the world as "Davids." Johnson, previously quoted, says of one of them:

"This boat, the first of the class known as 'Davids,' was built at his own expense by a citizen of Charleston, Mr. Theodore D. Stoney. He was aided in fitting it out by the counsel of Capt. F. D. Lee and Dr. St. Julien Ravenel. Having a length of about thirty feet, a diameter of five and a half feet at its middle, and ballasted so as to float deeply in the water, it was painted above the line a bluish-gray color. The torpedo, carried at its bow by a hollow iron shaft about fourteen feet ahead of the boat, was a copper cylinder charged with about 100 pounds of rifle powder, and provided with four sensitive tubes of lead containing an explosive mixture."

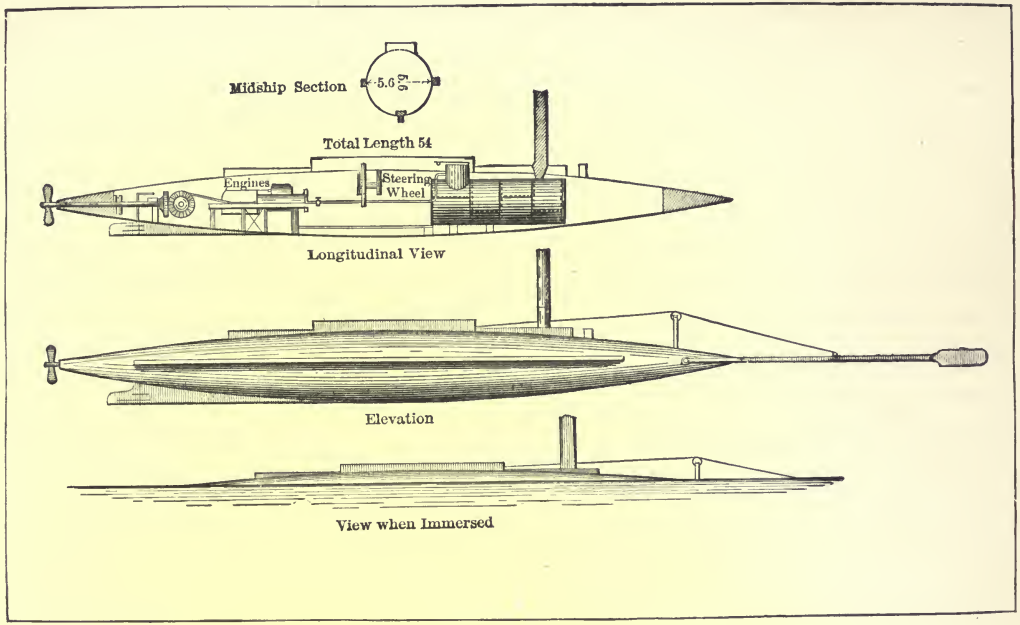
Lieut. W. T. Glassell, with three men, went out on the night of October 5, 1863, and ran the torpedo against the side of the *New Ironsides*. It was exploded three feet under water, where the ship's armor was three inches thick and the wood backing sufficient. No material harm was done, but the water thrown up partly

submerged the tiny boat, and she was abandoned by all but one man, who could not swim. He held on to her, and, as she did not sink, another of her crew came to her as she drifted with the tide, and the two took her back to Charleston. Glassell and the other man were taken prisoners.

The boat was called *David* because, although small, she was supposed to be a match for any nautical Goliath afloat.

The partial success of this boat encouraged the Confederates to construct others. The most famous of these was built at Mobile, in 1863, by Hundley & McClintock, according to Scharf, and while there she sank, and drowned her crew. She was raised and taken to Charleston, where Beauregard put her in service. As described by the Confederate General Maury:

"She was built of boiler iron, about thirty-five feet long, and was manned by a crew of nine men, eight of whom worked the propeller by hand; the ninth steered the boat and regulated her movements below the surface of the water; she could be submerged at pleasure to any desired depth, or could be propelled on the surface. In smooth still water she could be exactly controlled, and her speed was about four knots. It was intended that she should approach any vessel lying at anchor, pass under her keel, and drag a floating torpedo, which



Sketch Showing Torpedo Boats as Constructed at Charleston, S. C.

From "The Navy in the Civil War."

would explode on striking the side or bottom of the ship attacked. She could remain submerged for half an hour without inconvenience to her crew."

The story of her career in Charleston, as told by Scharf, is one of the most striking in naval warfare, for it shows the quality of the American when fully in earnest:

"Lieut. Payne, C. S. N., and a crew of eight men were preparing to take her out for action one night when she was swamped by the wash of a passing steamer and all hands except Payne were drowned. Again she was raised, and once more sunk—this time at Fort Sumter wharf, when six men were drowned, Payne and two others escaping. When she was brought to the surface, Hundley took her into the Stono River, where, after making several successful dives, she stuck her nose into the mud, and every soul on board perished by suffocation. For the fourth time she was raised, and experiments were made with her in Charleston harbor. She worked beautifully until she attempted to dive under the receiving ship *Indian Chief*, when she fouled a cable, and once more she proved a coffin for every man within her. Divers brought her up a week later, and Lieut. George E. Dixon, of Capt. Cothran's Co. of the 21st Ala. Inf'y, asked permission of Gen. Beauregard to try

her against the *Housatonic*, a splendid new ship-of-war, which lay in the North Channel off Beach Inlet.

"Beauregard consented, but only on the condition that she should not be used as a submarine machine, but operating on the surface of the water, and with a spar torpedo in the same manner as the *David*. All the thirty or more men who had met death in the 'fish' were volunteers, but Dixon had no difficulty in finding another volunteer crew ready to take the same risks. They were Arnold Becker, C. Simpkins, James A. Wicks, F. Collins, and —— Ridgway, all of the Confederate navy, and Capt. J. F. Carlson, of Captain Wagoner's company of artillery.

"It was a little before nine o'clock, on the evening of February 17, 1864, when Master J. K. Crosby, officer of the deck of the *Housatonic*, detected the torpedo-boat, a scant hundred yards away from the ship. It looked to him, he said, 'like a plank moving along the water,' and before he decided to give the alarm, he had lost the seconds in which he might have saved his vessel. When he did pass the word, her cable was slipped, her engine backed and all hands called to quarters; but Dixon had closed on her and fired his torpedo on the starboard side, just forward of her mainmast. A hole was knocked in her side extending

below her water line and she went down in four minutes. Five of the *Housatonic's* people were killed by the shock or drowned; the remainder took refuge in the rigging, from which they were rescued by other vessels of the fleet. But the victory of the 'fish' was fatal to herself and her crew. Whether she was swamped by the column of water thrown up by the explosion, or was carried down by the suction of the sinking *Housatonic*, will never be known; but she went under never to rise again, and the lives of all on board were sacrificed."

All the current histories of the war say that this *David* was found after the war on the bottom, within a hundred yards of the wreck of the *Housatonic*, but Johnson says the story is not confirmed. But that the men gave their lives to accomplish the work is certain.

This chapter may very well close with the story of a brave colored man, a Charleston harbor pilot, named Robert Small, at that time a slave. He was employed on the Confederate transport steamer *Planter*. On the morning of May 13, 1862, Small made one of the most remarkable dashes for liberty known to history. The *Planter* was lying at the pier, near army headquarters. The captain having gone on shore, Small, from the pilot-house, directed the lines holding her to the pier cast off, and it was done. He then headed out to sea, with

the Confederate flag flying above her taffrail. As he passed Sumter and the other forts, he saluted them with three long blasts of the whistle in the usual fashion, and they dipped their flags in return. His boldness saved him from suspicion, and when beyond the line of fire he hauled down the Confederate flag, sent up a white one, and gave the ship to the Union forces.

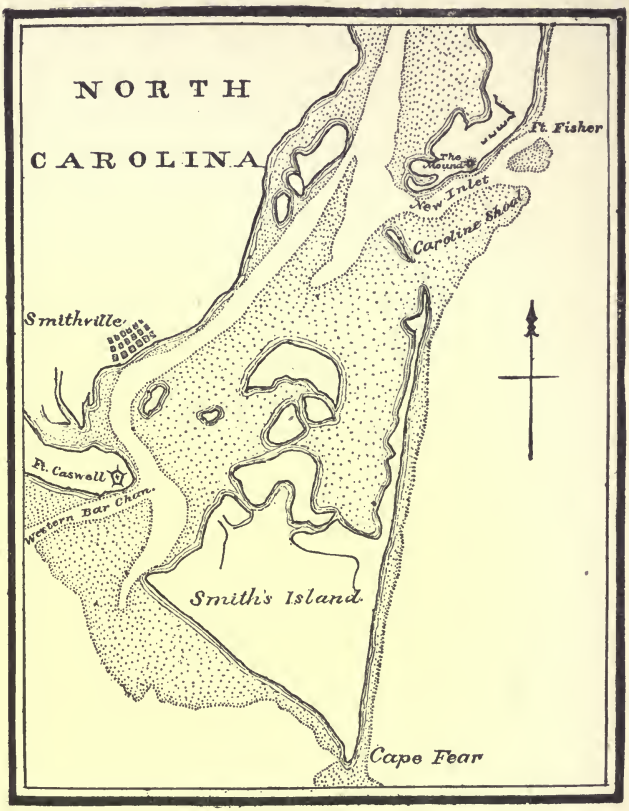
CHAPTER XVII

CAPTURE OF FORT FISHER

IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST WORKS IN THE SOUTH, THOUGH NOT WELL LOCATED—BUTLER'S POWDER-BOAT SCHEME, AND WHAT HE EXPECTED TO ACCOMPLISH BY IT—THROWING 15,000 SHELLS AT THE FORT DISABLED EIGHT GREAT GUNS OUT OF A TOTAL OF THIRTY-EIGHT—BUTLER THOUGHT THE FORT STILL TOO STRONG AND WOULD NOT TRY—HE DID NOT EVEN MAKE INTRENCHMENTS ACCORDING TO ORDERS—GEN. A. H. TERRY, WITH 6,000 SOLDIERS AND 2,000 FROM THE SHIPS, EASILY TOOK THE FORT THREE WEEKS LATER—THE NAVY'S LAST FIGHT IN THE CIVIL WAR.

THE last of the expeditions of the navy in the Civil War, and the greatest in the number and force of the ships and men, was that sent to capture Fort Fisher, guarding the entrance to Cape Fear River, on which Wilmington, North Carolina, stands. The preparations for this expedition began in the fall of 1864, and one cannot help wondering that no determined effort was made to capture the port early in the war, for, because of its situation and the peculiar nature of the entrances to the mouth of the river, it was the favorite resort of the blockade-runners, and therefore the chief source from which the Confederates drew their

foreign supplies. "From it Lee's army in front of Richmond was kept supplied, and



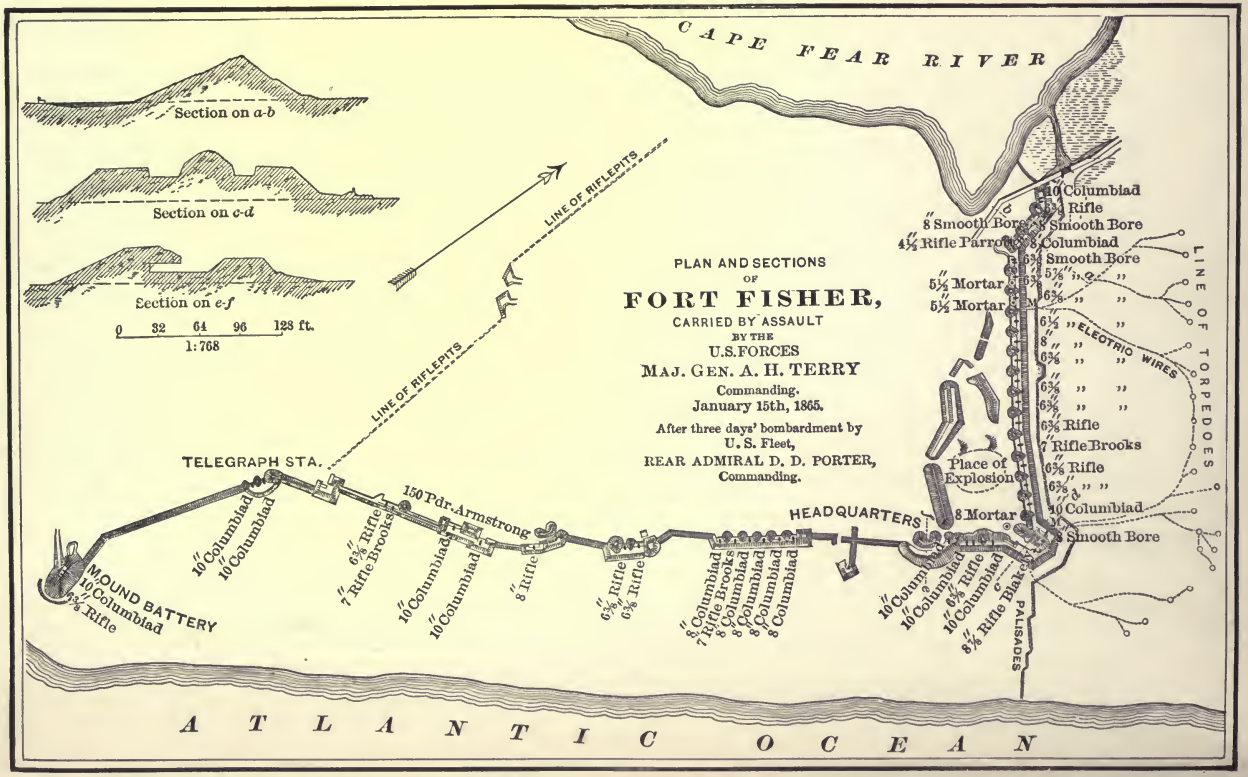
The Entrance to Cape Fear River, Showing Fort Fisher.
From "The Navy in the Civil War."

the great Confederate commander had plainly informed Colonel Lamb, the officer in charge of Fort Fisher, that the Confederates must

fall back from before Richmond, through inability to procure food, if the port was lost."

Fort Fisher was planned early in the war, and no fort built by the Confederates received greater care. A look at the chart will show that a long arm of land comes down from the north between the river and the sea—an arm that at last is split like the claw of a lobster into two fingers. One, very fat, and extending in toward the channel of the river, is called Federal Point, and the other, very slender, continues the coast line to what is called New Inlet. A shoal body of water called the basin lies between the two fingers. Fort Fisher was erected right where the two fingers split apart —right on the wrist.

Beginning a few yards back from the beach and north of the split of the fingers, the Confederates erected a mound of sand eighty feet high. On this they mounted an eight-inch (150-pounder) rifle and a ten-inch medium-length (columbiad) shell gun. From this mound a series of connected batteries or earthworks, of the most approved form, extended away to the north for about 1,400 yards. In this stretch were mounted seventeen great guns, including rifles from four and a half inches up to seven inches, with a number of ten-inch smooth-bore shell guns. In height and thickness these batteries were all that



From "The Navy in the Civil War."

could be wished in that day, and there were immense traverses (big mounds of sand) between the guns to protect the gun crews from an enfilading fire and from shells bursting on either side of them. At the north end of the north-and-south line so far described, the wall of the fort turned at a right angle toward the west. This part of the wall extending to the west was about 500 yards long, and it crossed the arm of dry land to the swamps of the river. Looking from the north, the whole fort was a very good L. The east-and-west arm mounted twenty-one great guns, and these were, for the most part, placed to defend the garrison from a land attack.

It was plain that the Confederates erected this huge structure to keep the Federal forces from entering Cape Fear River by the way of New Inlet. As a matter of fact, it was, in the judgment of engineers, built too near to the sea. The inlet was shoal at best. Only the lightest of vessels could enter it. Had Fort Fisher been erected back from the sea, where it would have been out of range of the deep-draft Union ships, a different story would have been told of it in history. As it was, Col. William Lamb, commanding it, gave a right good account of himself.

When an attack was at last planned by the Union forces, a very grave error was made in

placing Benjamin F. Butler at the head of the army forces after Admiral David D. Porter had been assigned to command the naval part of the expedition. This is not to disparage the talents of either man. It is said because the two leaders heartily disliked each other. It was therefore utterly impossible for them to coöperate.

Ships and transports were assembled at Hampton Roads in September, but the publicity given to the destination of the expedition caused a postponement until December. In the meantime Butler had conceived an idea, and in order not to be unfair his exact words, from page 775 of "Butler's Book," are given. He says:

"In that time, after hearing of the great destruction for many miles around made by an explosion of gunpowder at Erith, England, I made an examination into the various instances of the explosive effect of large quantities of powder; and I believed that possibly, by bringing within four or five hundred yards of Fort Fisher a large mass of explosives, and firing the whole in every part at the same moment—for it was the essence of the experiment to have the powder all exploded at the same instant—the garrison would at least be so far paralyzed as to enable, by a prompt landing of men, a seizure of the fort."

The reader is requested to note that he says "within *four or five hundred yards* of Fort Fisher." His idea was submitted to the Administration and approved, although Mr. Lincoln accepted it "with more caution" than the others. Admiral Porter accepted it because "it was considered advisable to try almost any expedient." When it came to details; Butler says on page 800 of his book: "My proposition to the Navy Department contemplated using but one hundred tons of powder . . . that this one hundred tons of powder should be put into a light-draught steamer, and arranged and packed in such a way that either by electrical or other apparatus fire could be communicated all through the vessel into every part of the mass of powder at one and nearly the same instant; that that vessel should be run ashore; that time fuses or other means of calculating the time necessary for the explosion should be put in operation, and that with the vessel hard and fast on shore so that none of the powder substantially could go down into the water until it had time to take fire, the whole mass should explode. The effect that I expected from that was that the gases from the burning powder would so disturb the air as to render it impossible for men to breathe within two hundred yards; that the magazines of the fort would be burst in and possibly the

magazines themselves be exploded; that by the enormous missiles that would be set in motion and by the concussion many men would be killed, and if the explosion were to be followed immediately by an attack of even a small number of effective men, the fort could be captured."

Accordingly, an old and worthless steamer, the *Louisiana*, was fitted for the purpose. Instead of 100 tons, 215 tons of powder were put on board. Part of it was not of full power, but nearly 200 tons of the best was stowed in the ship. The work of preparing her delayed the expedition some days, and it was valuable time. However, the expedition finally arrived on the coast, Butler, with his transports, at Masonboro' Inlet, twenty-five miles up the beach from Fort Fisher, and Porter out at sea, twenty-five miles from the fort. The transports had water and coal for but ten days, but there were delays due partly to weather and partly to the ill feeling between the commanders, and eventually Butler, with most of his transports, went away to Beaufort to take on water for the troops.

Favorable (smooth-water) weather was had on the night of December 23, 1864, and the powder-boat *Louisiana* was sent in. She was in charge of Commander A. C. Rhind, who had with him Lieut. S. W. Preston, Engi-

neer A. T. E. Mullen, Master's Mate Boyden, and seven men. The tug *Wilderness* towed the *Louisiana* in toward the fort near the north end of the sea-front until the water was fifteen feet deep, when the *Louisiana* cast off the line and proceeded under her own steam until she was in nine feet of water, when she was anchored. She was then 300 yards or less from the fort. Butler says she should have been beached, although he also says (see ante) 400 or 500 yards was near enough. Captain Rhind says he did not beach her because she would have been strained on the sand, and was likely to open a seam and let in the water and spoil the experiment. Clocks had been arranged to drop weights on explosive mixtures, and these were now set. Then a fire was built in the shaft tunnel in the stern to make sure that she exploded if the clocks failed, after which Rhind and his men returned to the tug. It was then exactly midnight. The tug ran twelve miles out to sea and stopped to watch the explosion. It took place at 1.40 o'clock, and amounted to absolutely nothing.

An army engineer found the wreck of a blockade-runner, called the *Condor*, 800 or 900 yards from the fort, assumed that it was the wreck of the *Louisiana*, and so reported. This report was used to discredit Commander Rhind. It seems, on the face of it, to have been a fraud,

for the army officer should have known that nothing would remain of the *Louisiana* after such an explosion. But if so much had remained, what became of Butler's theory?

The idea that exploding any possible mass of gunpowder in the open air outside of such a fort could hurt any one or anything inside was simply childish. But Butler never ceased to argue that it ought to have been a tremendous success. And it is a most sorrowful fact that, because of Butler's political influence, the magnificent bravery of the powder-boat's crew was never in any public manner recognized.

The next day, December 24, 1864, the warships steamed in and anchored at fair range, with the ironclads in one line and the wooden ships some distance outside. They bombarded the fort from 11.30 A.M. until sunset. At night Butler, with a part of his transports, came from Beaufort, and next morning the others arrived. It was arranged to land the troops, under cover of the gunboats, at a point two miles up the beach from the fort. Butler's orders were to make an assault, if that were deemed feasible, but if not, he was to throw up intrenchments and lay siege to the fort in the usual fashion. Soundings were made in the morning, a more effective line of fire was planned, and, late in the forenoon, the fleet steamed in and once

more opened fire. This was on December 25, 1864.

Nearly 3,000 troops were landed, with General Weitzel in command. They captured a couple of little outworks three miles north of the landing place, and then advanced with skirmishers. One of the skirmishers captured a flag from one point on the parapet, and another passed through the sally-port, bayoneted a man on a horse inside, and captured the horse. Weitzel says (see "Butler's Book") that he was within 600 yards of the fort, and from a sand-dune examined the work carefully. Butler ran down the beach in a shoal-draft transport, and at a range of 500 yards, as he says, looked at the fort for himself. He continues: "I there met General Weitzel returning from a reconnoissance. He stated to me that he had been out to the front line, and had seen Fort Fisher. As a defensive work the fort was uninjured." He continues: "I said to Colonel Comstock, who was on board with me [Butler did not land], 'jump into a boat with General Weitzel, pull ashore and examine with him and report to me if an assault is feasible; *to me it does not look so*, but I am unwilling to give it up.'" This is from "Butler's Book," page 794. Being so primed by Butler, Comstock reported an assault not feasible, and Butler wrote to Admiral Porter that night as follows:

"Upon landing the troops and making a thorough reconnoissance of Fort Fisher, both General Weitzel and myself are fully of the opinion that the place could not be carried by assault, as it was left substantially uninjured as a defensive work by the navy fire. We found seventeen guns protected by traverses, two only of which were dismounted, bearing up the beach, and covering a strip of land, the only practicable route, not more than wide enough for a thousand men in line of battle. . . . I shall therefore sail for Hampton Roads as soon as the transport fleet can be got in order."

By Confederate reports it appears that the fort was garrisoned by "900 veterans, sixty C. S. N. sailors and marines and 450 junior reserves between sixteen and eighteen years of age." On December 24th three guns had been disabled in the fort, and on the 25th five others were disabled. Two more had exploded. Including howitzers, the fort had left thirty-four guns, of which twenty pointed up the beach toward an assaulting column. There were also some torpedoes planted in the sand, and a very good line of palisades "made of heavy timber pointed on top." But for the delay due to the wild powder-boat scheme, the Confederates would have been caught with only 667 men in the fort, according to General Whiting, who commanded the

Confederate forces of the Wilmington district. Whiting wrote that he believed an assault on Christmas day would have failed. In his official report he said of the fort: "The delay due to the heavy weather of Wednesday and Thursday after the arrival of the fleet was its salvation."

With these facts in mind, a student of history may find the following words in Admiral Porter's report of December 27, 1864 (see Report Sec. Navy, 1865, p. 51): "My despatch of yesterday will scarcely give you an idea of my disappointment at the conduct of the army authorities in not attempting to take possession of the forts which had been so completely silenced by our guns; they were so blown up, burst up and torn up that the people inside had no intention of fighting any longer."

Certainly this is not true. Porter guessed at the facts. The Confederate officers (see Scharf) had to use the flat of their swords to get some of the reserves out to man the parapet, but they had a force of nearly 1,000 that would have made a fight. But if Butler had been as anxious to carry the fort by assault as he was to report a failure on the part of Admiral Porter, he would have carried the fort inside of an hour with even the partial force he had landed. Moreover, when he said the beach was "the only practicable route" for

an assaulting party, he was mistaken, for General Terry, three weeks later, found a much safer route "under the river bank." It is an interesting fact that Butler in his book does not attempt any explanation of his lack of knowledge, when before the fort, of the river-bank route.

Thomas E. Taylor, a noted blockade-runner, who has printed a book on his experiences, was in Richmond in consultation with the Confederate chiefs at the time of this assault, and wrote the following in a letter to his employers regarding the matter: "They nearly had Fort Fisher; they were within sixty yards of it—and had they pushed on as they ought to have done, could have taken it. It was a terrific bombardment."

Anyway, Butler did not even throw up intrenchments. He abandoned the enterprise altogether.

However, the operations against the fort were only suspended. Admiral Porter filled up his ships with ammunition. On January 13, 1865, Gen. Alfred H. Terry landed with 6,000 men. The ships anchored with the monitors at a range of half a mile, and the others outside at three-quarters of a mile (in some cases further), and a storm of bursting shells poured over the fort. It lasted all that day, was continued at intervals during the night

The Bombardment of Fort Fisher.

From a lithograph.

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and all the next day. The fort replied slowly, partly because ammunition was scarce and partly because of the effect of the Union fire.

That night an assault was planned, and 1,600 sailors and 400 marines were landed to help the soldiers. At 9 o'clock on the morning of January 15, 1865, the fleet once more opened fire. The soldiers, who had been lying at the river side of the arm of land, charged up to attack the extreme west end of the fort. The sea force, in three divisions, led by Cushing (he who destroyed the *Albemarle*), Lieut.-commander James Parker, and Lieut.-commander T. O. Selfredge, Jr., charged up the barren beach, where Butler did not dare to go, to attack the sea front. They had the post of greatest danger, for they were wholly uncovered.

T. O. Selfredge.
From a photograph owned by Mr. C. B. Hall.

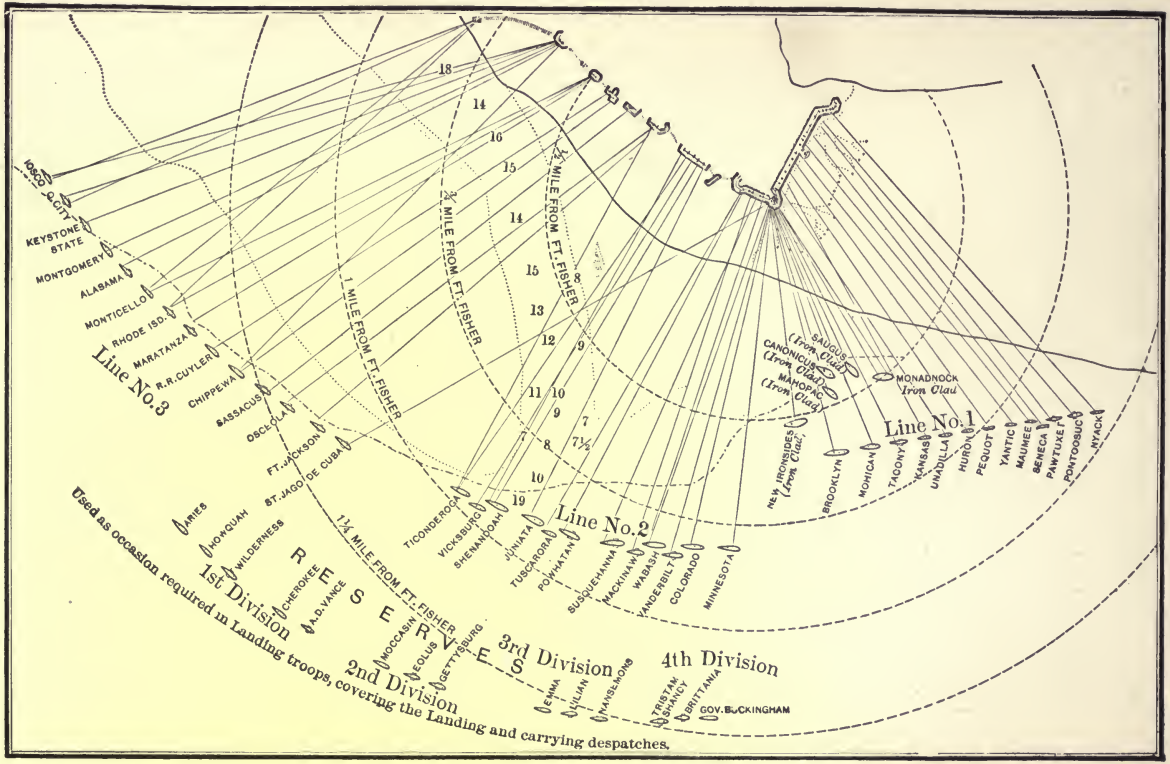
"The attacking column of the army was hid and protected by the river bank as it ap-

proached the left flank of the work, but the naval column came up the open beach upon our center. As its success would have been disastrous, I concentrated all available guns upon this column, and met its assault with the larger portion of my men, posting them upon the ramparts so as to fire down upon the sailors and marines." The quotation is from a letter by Colonel Lamb, commanding the fort.

Some of the sea force reached the row of palisades, and there found shelter, but when eighty-two had been killed and 269 wounded, the others broke and fled out of range. They were armed (except the marines) with cutlasses and revolvers only. It was not a good place for boarders. Nevertheless, this assault was not in vain, as W. R. Mayo, one of the Confederate officers in the fort, testifies in Scharf's work. He says:

"Though proving a great failure in itself, this assault occupied the nearly worn-out and depleted garrison, and had the direct result of admitting the army to the ramparts of the disabled land face of the fort before attention could be given to the assaulting column in that direction."

There were forty-two ships in the line bombarding Fort Fisher on January 15, 1865, of which six were ironclads—five monitors and the *New Ironsides.* The total number killed



521 cut off Second Attack upon Fort Fisher by the U. S. Navy, under Rear-admiral D. D. Porter, January 13, 14, 15, 1865.

afloat during the three days of fighting was seventy-four, and 289 were wounded. Ammen estimates from the reports in the department that 21,716 shells were thrown at the fort. In the first attack 15,000 were thrown.

Scharf has this to say of the capture of Fort Fisher:

"The fall of Wilmington was the severest blow to the Confederate cause which it could receive from the loss of any port. It was far more injurious than the capture of Charleston, and, but for the moral effect, even more hurtful than the evacuation of Richmond. With Wilmington and the Cape Fear River open, the supplies that reached the Confederate armies would have enabled them to have maintained an unequal contest for years, but with the fall of Fort Fisher the constant stream of supplies was effectually cut off and the blockade made truly effective—not by the navy fleet, but by its captures on land."

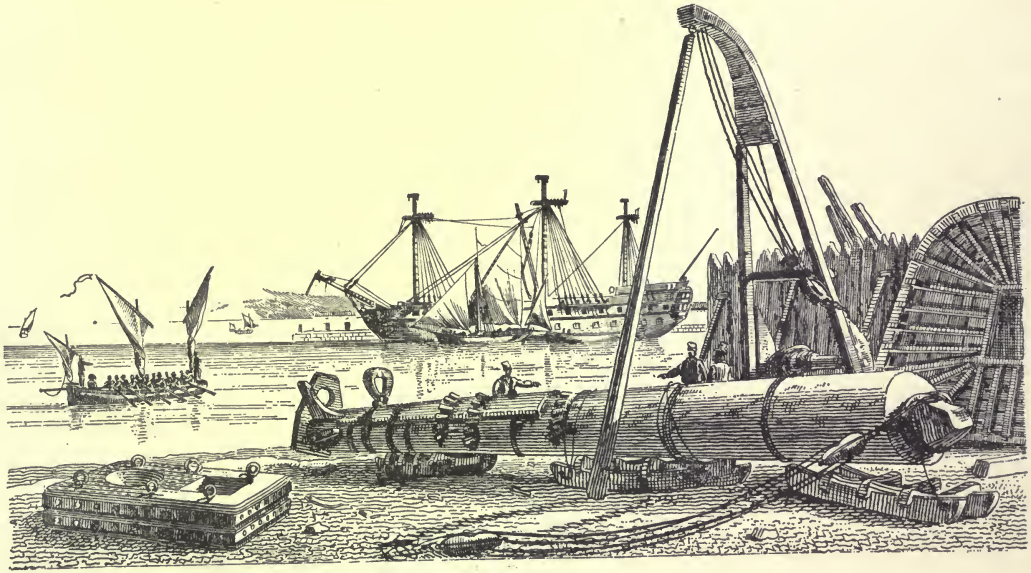
The other forts about the river soon fell into government hands. The Civil War was already drawing to a close before the assault was made. It was a question only of how many days the able and determined men of the South would struggle against overwhelming numbers. The fall of Fort Fisher was therefore fortunate for both sides. It the sooner brought a hopeless fight to an end.

CHAPTER XVIII

STORY OF THE NEW NAVY

THE FOLLY OF ALLOWING OTHER NATIONS TO EXPERIMENT FOR US—IN SPITE OF WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THEIR MISTAKES, WE WERE UNABLE, WHEN WE FIRST BEGAN FOR OURSELVES, TO BUILD EVEN A FIRST-CLASS CRUISER—THE RESULT OF TEN YEARS OF EARNEST WORK—BATTLE-SHIPS WHOSE POWER IS CONCEDED BY FOREIGN WRITERS—CRUISERS THAT AWAKENED THE PRIDE OF THE NATION—THREE "NEWFANGLED NOTIONS"—A YANKEE ADMIRAL AT RIO JANEIRO AND A YANKEE LIEUTENANT ON THE COAST OF MEXICO—THE ONE IMPORTANT FACT ABOUT THE NEW NAVY.

THE naval history of the United States during the period since the Civil War has been not a little like that of the period following the War of the Revolution. When the Civil War was ended and the acute complication with our over-sea neighbors during 1865 was past, we sold off our ships as a merchant disposes of his shelf-worn goods. It is true we did not sell every ship as we did in 1785, but in 1885 we were relatively in as helpless a condition as, and actually in a more shameful condition than, we were when we had not a ship that belonged to the nation; for the wooden hulks on the naval list in 1885



The Old Method of Handling a Ship's Bowsprit.

From an old engraving.

Hauling a Vessel into Port a Hundred Years Ago.

From an old engraving.

and their smooth-bore Dahlgren shell guns were, for the purpose of carrying the flag in the face of an enemy having ironclads and rifles, absolutely useless. And as to the shame of it, we know that in 1785 the nation was poor, and even the few dollars needed to keep a frigate or two in commission seemed a large sum, while the nation in the later years, when the navy was neglected, was spending enough money in dredging out commerceless channels to have built squadrons of several times the needed force. It is the usual thing for writers who refer to that period to say, because we slipped through it without a more serious foreign complication than the murder of a few American citizens by the Spanish government at Santiago de Cuba, in 1873, it was really to our advantage that we built no ships. The European governments were experimenting at great cost, and we were saved all of that. We got the benefit of their experience and saved the dollars. But the fact is we could not and did not benefit by their experience to any degree worth serious consideration. Neither the individual man nor the aggregation of men called a nation can take advantage of the apprenticeship which another man or nation has served. I do not hope to have this statement believed by people to whom the only fruition of labor and life is a dollar. But there are

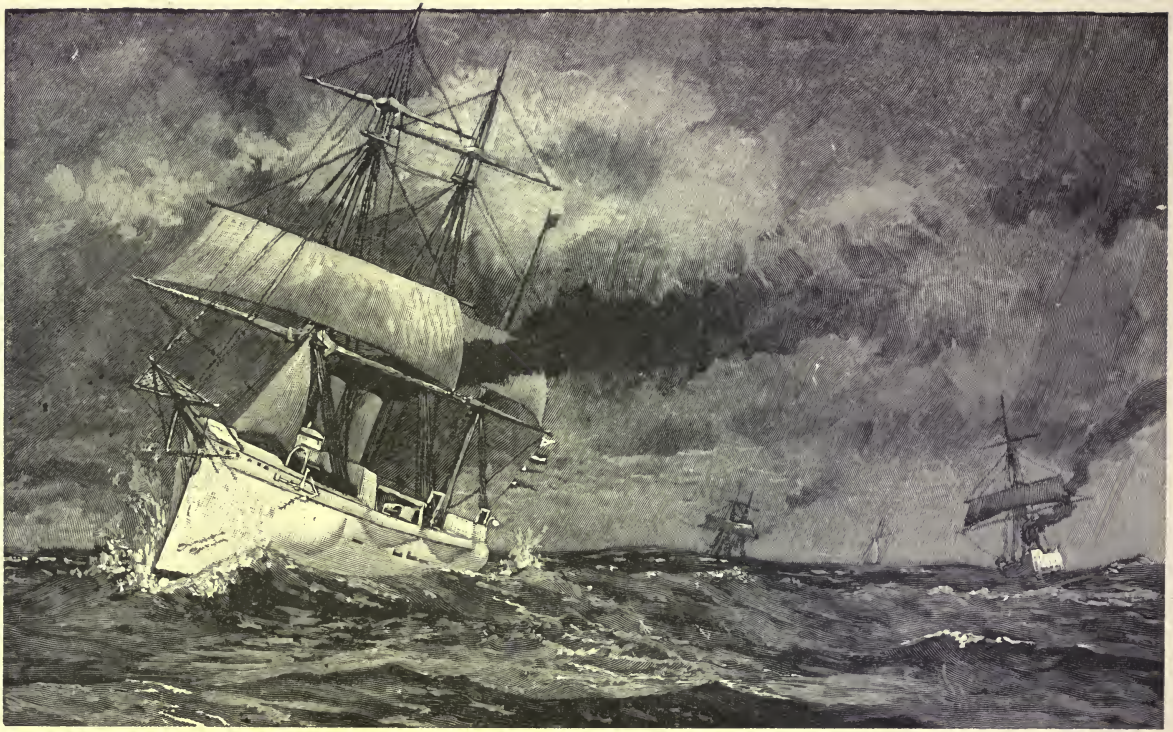
some who understand that national character, like individual character, is of more importance than dollars; that the very chuckling over the dollars we saved "while other nations were experimenting for us" is contemptible; that, to take another and more material point of view, what we lost in the development of the brains of our mechanics and inventors by letting the other nations do the "experimenting for us" was of infinitely greater value than the whole revenue of the nation. It is not the loss of a product of ships that is to be deplored, but the loss of a product of men.

The building of the new navy actually began, one may say, when Secretary of the Navy William H. Hunt appointed a board of naval officers, with Rear-admiral John Rodgers at its head, "to determine the requirements of a new navy." These officers considered the matter jointly for a proper time, and then reported that the United States should have twenty-one battle-ships—ships fit to meet the best floating forts of the world; seventy unarmored cruisers of various sizes, twenty torpedo boats, five torpedo gunboats, and five rams.

It was not an extravagant estimate, and it was approved, in a way, by the nation. Did we build them, or any considerable part of them, straightway? Not at all. We could not build even one of the armored ships. We

had saved the expense of experimenting; we had allowed other nations to do our experimenting for us. "Right smart" economists we were. When European experiments had fairly shown what European practice was likely to be, we started in to adopt the European ideas, and suddenly learned, what had never occurred to us as a nation, that the foundation of all sea power is a shipyard. We had been able in the old days to set afloat efficient wooden fighting machines in four months, but when we started in to build an ironclad navy of the modern style, we found that we could not roll even the thinnest of modern armor-plates, and that we could not make a gun that would pierce even the cheap armor carried by the old-fashioned monitors we had lying up in ordinary. The opportunity for showing how easy it was to take advantage of the experiments of other nations was at hand. We had a book knowledge of everything that had been done abroad, but instead of starting in with a ship that should excel, or even equal, say, the *Téméraire* of the British navy, not to mention the contemporary (in design) *Edinburgh*, we found we must do a little experimenting and gain a little experience for ourselves.

We had some shipyards that were supported by the coastwise trade, and to them we went. The *Chicago*, the *Atlanta*, the *Boston*, and the



The White Squadron in Mid-ocean.

From a drawing by R. F. Zogbaum.

Dolphin were the result. Instead of building battle-ships, we built, for lack of experience, third-rate cruisers. We also concluded to complete an old monitor or two that for long years had been lying on the stocks. To do this Rome went to Carthage to buy shields for its legions—we bought our armor-plate in a foreign market. We had to do it or go

U. S. S. *Charleston*, San Diego Harbor

From a photograph.

without. The writer remembers the day when we even imported the bunting of which we made the "gridiron flag"!

It was humiliating to go abroad for what we could not make ourselves. But another statement of the kind must be made, and then the record of shame ends; for which let us all be sincerely and devoutly thankful. We went abroad for the plans of one of our largest cruisers—the *Charleston*.

Let the reader have no misunderstanding about this matter. If war had been impending it would have been right, and even an imperative duty, to buy warships fully equipped wherever they could be found. But we were building a navy in time of peace, and a ship that "could not get out of her own way," from our own designers, was better than the best afloat bought from a foreign land. In the building of the new navy—in the building of the White Squadron, of which we make boast in our periodicals—the product was nothing; the building of men was everything.

It was not without labor and pain that we got the first modern ships afloat. It was not so much that short-sighted economists interfered, for a surplus of money was found in the treasury, but the politicians were numerous and the patriots few. The politician in power must needs use the new ships to perpetuate his power; he who was out of power must use them as ferries to get into power. They were extravagantly praised and extravagantly decried. Time has shown the extravagance in both directions; but it is the tendency of man to admire his own, and when the truth is told, these ships are not "the best of their class afloat," unless we add the modifying and saving clause "considering the circumstances under which they were built." As the product of

apprentices in the art of building modern warships, they are marvels of excellence. But since they were designed we have learned something.

The *Atlanta* and *Boston* were good fourteen-knot cruisers, but there were faster boats, armed with guns as good as theirs, in Europe. American policy could not permit such a state of affairs to exist, and we designed larger and better ones than anything afloat. We laid down the *New York*. She cost "a whole lot of money," it is true, but as we recall the thrill that stirred the nation when the story of her trial trip was told—when it was told that we had the swiftest and most powerful cruiser in the world, we are bound to say that twice the sum invested in any other way by the government could not have given the nation so great a benefit. It was not that any one was incited to a point where he wished the nation to go to war. On the contrary, the *New York* was an assurance that in our dealings with other peoples we would "not be influenced, or even be suspected of being influenced, by a consciousness of weakness on the sea." Nations are like dogs in this, that the weaker must needs put his tail between his legs and sneak away when trouble brews. But, if any one doubts that nations are bullies, let him consider the names that are given to

ships in Europe. With the *New York* afloat, the American patriot was so far assured that his country would not be bullied, and so we should have peace.

The swifter cruisers like the twenty-two-knot *Columbia* and the twenty-three-knot *Minneapolis*, and the little cruisers and gunboats for shoal

The *Columbia* on her Government Speed Trial.

From a photograph by Rau.

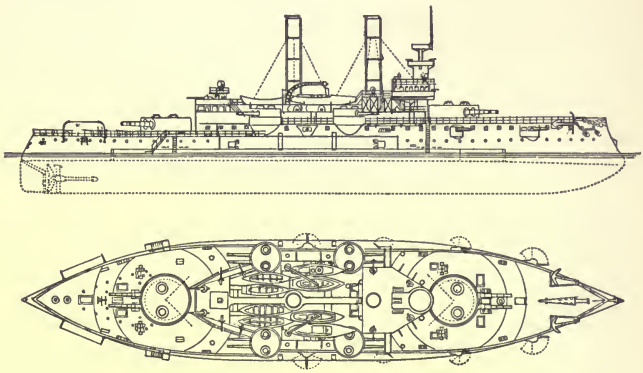
water, followed the *New York*. In the meantime we were at work on battle-ships, beginning with the *Maine* and ending with the *Iowa*, the *Indiana*, the new *Kearsarge*, and the *Illinois*. The English author of "Ironclads in Action" compares the *Iowa* with the British *Majestic*. It is a most instructive comparison—the most instructive pages, for an American reader, in the whole of this valuable work are those de-

voted to this comparison. For, although the *Majestic* is set down with a tonnage of 15,000 and the *Iowa* with but 11,500, the Yankee ship throws at a broadside 4,532 pounds of metal (in guns above a twenty-pounder) to the other's 4,000; she has an armor belt of fourteen inches to the other's nine; the armor "upon the heavy gun positions" is "15-inch in the *Iowa*" to "14-inch in the *Majestic*"; and she could keep the sea five weeks to the Britisher's four. On the other hand, the *Majestic* has more freeboard, and could fight in a rougher sea, and she has the hull beneath her quick-firing guns protected in better fashion. But when it is all summed up, it is conceded by this English writer that the *Iowa* is at least a good match for the bigger *Majestic*.

As was said before, let no mistake be made about this. It is a matter of the greatest moment when our ship of 11,500 tons is conceded to be a match for one of 15,000 tons in the best navy of the world—not because we have the ship, but because we have developed the men who can do that kind of work and the tools for their use.

As many of the readers are aware, the *Iowa* is by no means the best battle-ship in the American navy. For instance, in her main battery she carries four twelve-inch and eight eight-inch breech-loading rifles, and six four-

inch rifles, known as rapid-fire guns, because they use cartridges on the plan of a revolver or rifle cartridge, and can therefore be fired in service five or six times a minute. The new *Kearsarge* will carry four thirteen-inch and four eight-inch breech-loading rifles and fourteen five-inch rapid-fire guns. The new *Illinois*

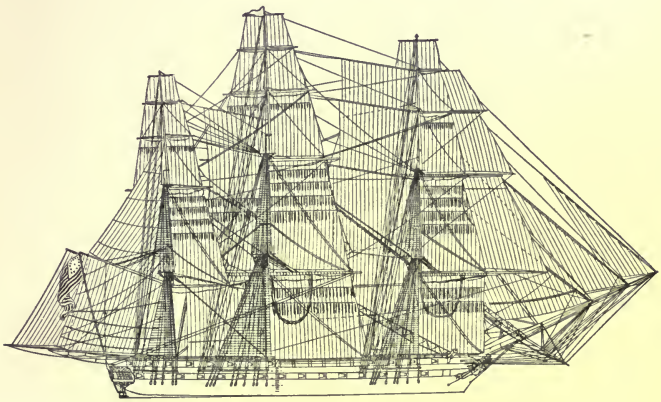


Plan of the *Iowa*.

class will carry four thirteen-inch rifles and fourteen six-inch rapid-fire guns. The difference in the striking power of the batteries of the *Iowa* and the newer ships must be manifest to every reader. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the weight of metal landed, and not the weight of metal thrown, wins the battle.

While we were developing shipbuilders we were also developing gunmakers. For a long

time after the war we were contented with making steel tubes which could be shoved into Dahlgren smooth-bores, and so convert them into rifles of eight-inch calibre. Such makeshift work, needless it is to say, served only to drag down the standard of the American gunmakers. But in 1886 the sum of



Plan of the *Constitution.*

$2,128,000 was appropriated for guns—that is, modern rifles. To go into the details of other modern shipbuilding or modern rifle-making in a history of this kind is obviously impossible; but we may recall the fact that the *Monitor's* turret was composed of eight layers of one-inch iron plates, placed so as to break joints, and that the best rifle of that day, a seven-inch Brooke, firing a solid projectile

weighing 150 pounds, was unable to do any material damage to the turret. The first contracts for gun-forgings and armor-plates of modern construction were signed in May, 1887—ten years ago. Since that time we have made the plant for the work, and have turned out armor-plates of steel eighteen inches thick that are hardened and toughened to a point where a drill cannot penetrate, and the best projectile, an armor-piercing projectile, weighing 1,100 pounds and "striking with a force sufficient to lift 1,000 tons twenty-five feet, crushed in the backing of oak, but only dented the plate." The mere statement that our modern rifles throw projectiles weighing 1,100 pounds, which strike with sufficient force to lift 1,000 tons twenty-five feet high, tells the story of the development of the gun. Another exhibit of the progress made is found in the fact that an eight-inch smooth-bore in the old days threw a cast-iron projectile, weighing sixty-eight pounds, with a velocity of 1,579 feet per second at the muzzle of the gun. The energy of the projectile was estimated at 452 foot-tons. The modern eight-inch rifle throws a steel bolt weighing 250 pounds, at a muzzle velocity of 2,500 feet per second, with a striking power of 10,830 foot-tons. The old eight-inch iron shot could not penetrate four inches of iron plates, while the modern steel bolt penetrates

twenty-six inches of wrought iron. The best thirteen-inch modern rifles have a striking power of about 35,000 foot-tons and penetrate thirty-four inches of wrought iron.

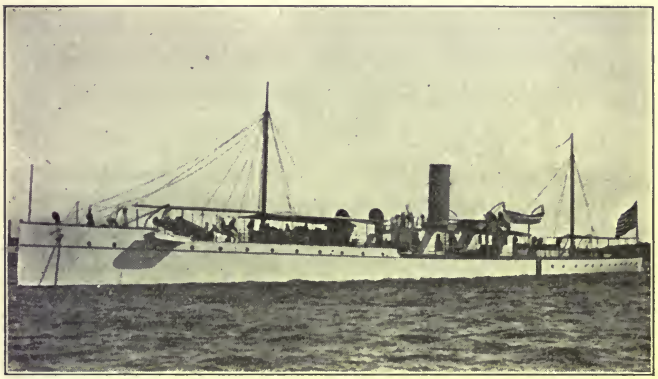
After an apprenticeship of ten years, the gun-makers and shipbuilders of the United States have done well enough to entirely satisfy the people whom they have served. And yet the American navy, in the matter of ships and guns, is at best the fifth in the world. It is not considered necessary to the interest of this history to enter into any argument to show that the American navy should have a higher standing in point of numbers. But, if the story of the American navy has been written here as the writer understood it, then it is apparent that the American's hope of peace has always rested on the efficiency of a modest number of ships. We have had peace with the aggressive nations of the earth while we have had an efficient force afloat, and we have suffered humiliation when we have neglected our navy. To make the appeal that is likely to be effective, history shows that it does not pay to try to get on without a navy. It need not be either the first or even the third in point of numbers, but it must be first in point of efficiency. To keep our hands in practice and our tools from rusting and our inventors from stagnation, we must lay down at least one new ship of the first

class every year. We must not forget that Europe has steadily built new ships to improve on those with which we have led the way.

While building ships that in general construction were like those of Europe, the United States has followed its ancient policy of encouraging inventors by trying what the conservatives call "newfangled notions." The success that followed the adoption of "newfangled notions" like steam power, the screw propeller, and the Ericsson *Monitor*, has been fully appreciated by the world at large. The "newfangled Yankee notions," in fact, kept up the quality of the old American navy. Since the navy began its rejuvenating career, ten years ago, three "newfangled" ideas have been tried. One was a steam ram, pure and simple. It was a ship designed to steam at seventeen knots per hour, with a ram for its sole weapon of offence, and it was built solely for harbor defence. Because, in its way, it is a revival of the porcupine policy, nothing more need be said about it.

Another novelty was what is called the dynamite cruiser *Vesuvius*. Here is a sea-going torpedo boat armed with three fifteen-inch air-guns that can throw 400 or 500 pounds of high explosive to a range of a mile or more with reasonable accuracy. It is not a popular style of warship with naval officers, and so far

as its purpose is for harbor defence, these officers are entirely right. It is the business of the army, with its forts and submarine torpedoes, to defend the harbors. For forts and submarine torpedoes are entirely sufficient for the purpose, and much more economical than ships adapted only for harbor defence. Nev-



The *Vesuvius*.

From a photograph by Rau.

ertheless, the idea of a dynamite cruiser has not had a fair trial. The *Vesuvius* is a very small ship. Her popguns are of a fixed elevation, the range being determined by varying the pressure of the air. It is reasonably sure that the defects that have been developed in trials of her guns and aërial torpedoes might be corrected were she in the hands of some one thoroughly in earnest in the matter, and

that a cruiser, to fire high explosives accurately and efficiently and safely by means of compressed air, might be designed. It is also reasonably certain that, because of the dislike of naval officers generally for the present craft, no more of the kind will be designed until Uncle Sam is compelled to "hustle," if one may be allowed the expression, by the pressure of actual war. Because coastwise steamers may be readily cut down, and adapted for the use of this kind of a torpedo in a very few months, no one is likely to worry about the present failure to build more dynamite cruisers.

The third of the "newfangled ideas" is really a very old idea, as the reader will observe. It is a submarine boat designed to travel in ordinary circumstances with its back out of water, and yet be able, when occasion requires, to go underneath altogether. It is the invention of Mr. John P. Holland, who for many years has been at work on the cigar-shaped diving-ship idea. The one now building (1897) is only eighty-five feet long by eleven in diameter—a mere model of what a ship ought to be, if the idea were to be thoroughly tested. It might, indeed, be of some use for raising a blockade of the port of New York, just as smaller vessels were used to damage Union ships off Charleston in the Civil War. But, as already said over and again, the navy

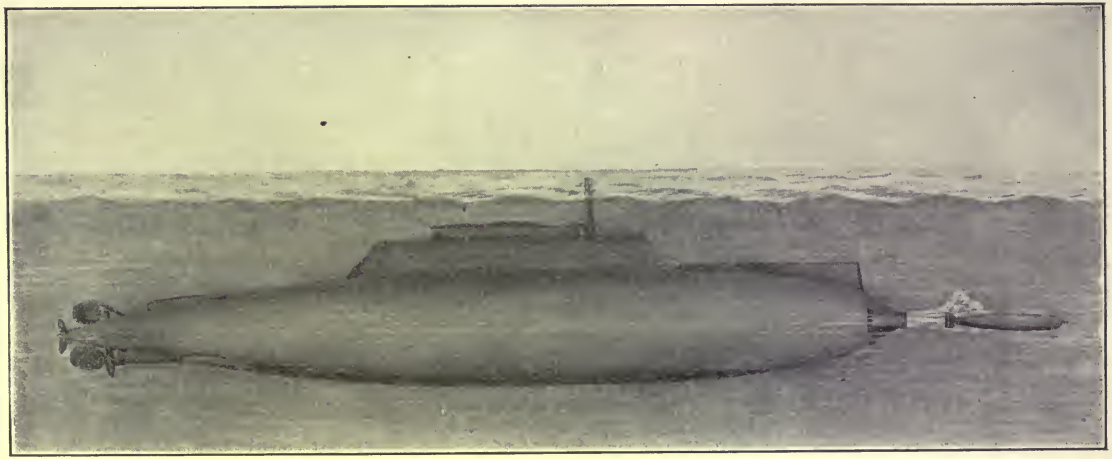
that the American nation needs is one that will prevent any nation on earth contemplating a blockade of any American port. However, this is not to condemn the building of this sub-

Launching of One of the Holland Boats, the *Holland*, at Elizabethport, N. J., 1897.
From a photograph belonging to the John P. Holland Co.

marine boat. It was well worth building, just as the tiny ship in which Ericsson proved his screw propeller was worth building. Considerable space was given in Volume I to the doings of the submarine boats in the Rev-

olutionary War because the building of ships which might be entirely submerged has never been attempted on a scale that would warrant a fair trial of the idea. There are many difficulties to be overcome, the chief of which is due to the fact that the ordinary compass goes wrong altogether when placed in a diver. It is nevertheless reasonable to suppose that every defect may be overcome. It is certain that the defects will not be overcome until a fair trial of the ship is had. Because of certain manifest advantages in having a ship that can live entirely submerged as well as when awash, or floating high out of water, there are men who believe that such ships will eventually become veritable peace-makers. We who are conservatives call them visionaries, and they reply that men of our class called Capt. M. C. Perry a visionary in 1839 because he said he believed that steamships would eventually supersede the gloriously beautiful frigate of the olden day.

Of the doings of the navy since the Civil War little need be said. We have had no war with any people, although on two or three occasions American commanders have been obliged to strip their ships for action to enforce a decent respect for the American flag. The most notable instance of this kind was in



Another One of the Holland Submarine Boats: the *Plunger.*

(Submerged, with camera lucida tube in position.)

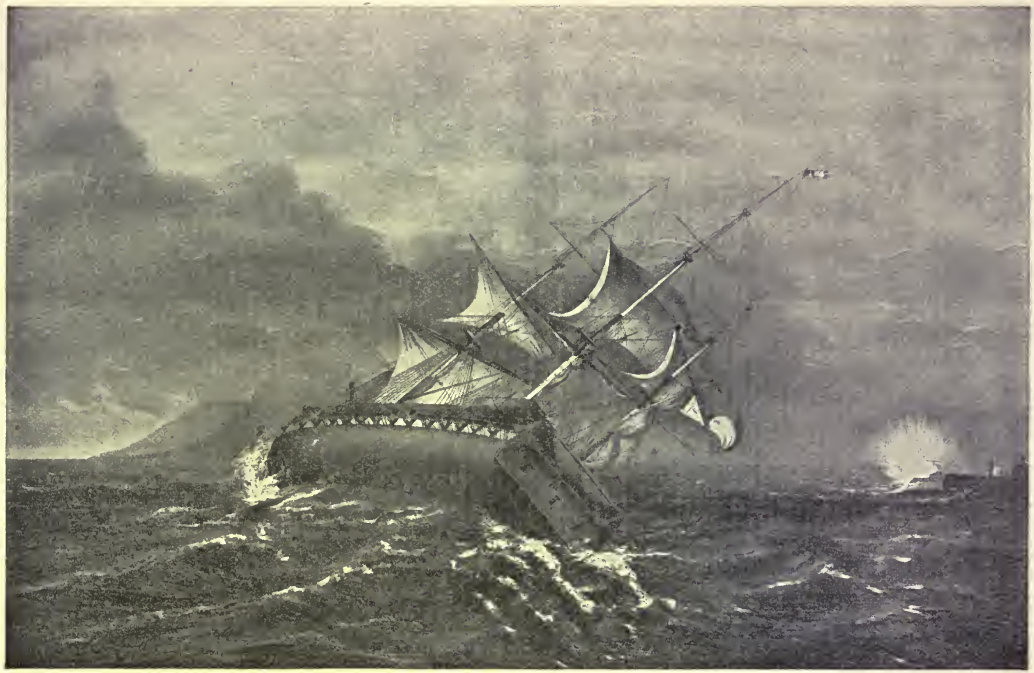
From a photograph of a drawing belonging to the John P. Holland Co.

1894. The Brazilian navy was then in revolt against the Brazilian government, and the bay of Rio Janeiro was held by the rebel squadron. The purpose of the revolt, so far as it had a purpose outside of the personal feelings of the leaders, was to restore the monarchy. The insurgents would have been driven into making peace very quickly but for the fact that the British, in the interests of trade and politics, were very anxious to have the monarchy restored. British residents of Rio Janeiro contributed considerable sums of money to the support of the rebels and served actively as spies on the government. The senior officer of the British navy present, under the plea of neutrality, was able to see that the rebel leaders received all the rights of belligerents, although no nation had accorded these rights to them. For a time all the foreign warships in port, except the Germans, sided with the British in this matter. It is a curious fact that the senior American officer present refused to give protection to American merchantmen in port when they wished to go to the piers to discharge their cargoes. The rebel leader, Saldanha de Gama, said he should fire on any ship going to the piers, and American ships had to lie out in the bay and wait for the end of the war. Meantime yellow fever was raging there and many good men lost their lives.

Finally Admiral A. E. K. Benham came to the port. He at once told the American captains to go to the piers, and he would see that they were not fired upon—at least that trouble for the rebel fleet should follow any such move on their part.

Accordingly, on Sunday, January 29, 1894, Captain Blackford, of the American bark *Amy*, and two other captains, gave notice that they should haul into the piers with their ships on Monday morning. Admiral Saldanha de Gama, hearing of this, said officially that he should fire on the merchantmen if they did so. The rebel squadron was, as a whole, a worthless collection of old wooden hulks and new coasters armed with fairly good guns; but there was one good monitor, the *Aquidaban*, so there was no predicting what the desperate rebel would do. It was necessary to take de Gama at his word, and so, soon after daylight on the morning of the 30th, the Yankee squadron cleared for action, while the little cruiser *Detroit*, Capt. Willard H. Brownson, was sent in to take a station where she could command the two rebel warships, *Guanabara* and *Trajano*, that lay where they could, if so disposed, riddle the merchant ship *Amy*.

When Brownson arrived the *Amy* began to warp in toward the pier. A musket was fired from the *Guanabara*, presumably toward one



The Harbor of Rio Janeiro, Showing the Frigate *Savannah* Struck by a Squall, July 5, 1856.

From a lithograph.

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of the American ships. The *Detroit* replied with a shot first across the bow of the offending *Guanabara*, and then with another that struck her. It was a mere matter of form so far; it was notifying the Brazilians that the Americans were thoroughly in earnest. But, seeing a couple of tugs controlled by the rebels getting into position where they might ram the *Detroit*, Brownson took her in between the big warships where he could have raked and sunk them, and sunk the tugs at the same time. That ended the matter.

The Stern and Propeller of the *Nipsic* after the Samoan Hurricane.

From a photograph.

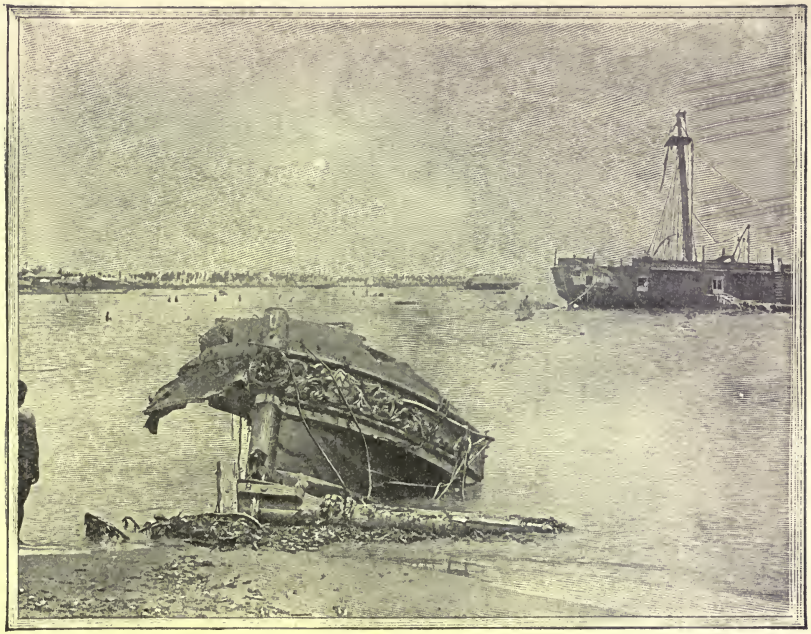
Saldanha de Gama concluded not to fire on the American flag. Before night the British, as well as all other foreign merchantmen, were tumbling over each other, so to speak, in their haste to follow the Yankee ships to the piers.

Captain Brownson, when a lieutenant on the *Mohican* in 1870, was placed in command of a boat's crew and sent to cut out the steamer *Forward*, a filibusters' craft operating on the coast of Mexico. She was found in a lagoon near

San Blas, and her crew made a fight. She was carried by boarding after a loss of two men killed (including Master J. M. Wainwright) and six wounded.

Of great contemporary interest were the polar expeditions since the Civil War, but with the exception of the discoveries on the north coast of Greenland made by Lieutenant Peary, nothing of historical interest was accomplished. And mention must also be made of the great gale at Samoa, when the *Vandalia* sank and the *Trenton* and the *Nipsic* were thrown ashore, for nothing has stirred the hearts of the American people in recent years as the story of the fortitude of the men who, with death staring them in the face, sang and played "The Star Spangled Banner."

But when all has been told and written about the history of the American navy since the Civil War, the one significant fact of all is this: we have from our own resources, mental and material, sent afloat a White Squadron that, though small in number, is fit to keep the sea in spite of foul weather or any other foul force.



The *Eber*. The *Trenton*.

The Harbor after the Samoan Hurricane.

From a photograph.

INDEX

Abby Bradford, merchant-ship, capture of, by the *Sumter*, iv. 412; captured by the frigate *Powhatan*, 413.

Abellino, Yankee privateer, captures prizes in the Mediterranean, iii. 343.

Acasta, British gun-boat, attacks the *Constitution*, iii. 260.

Acquia Creek, Potomac River, capture of Confederate forts at, iv. 66, 81–83.

Active, British brig, captured by the *Hazard*, i. 206.

Adams, American frigate, changed to a corvette, iii. 54; Captain Charles Morris in command of, 57; on the coast of Africa, 58; chased by the *Tigris*, 59; scurvy on board, 60; runs on a rock, 61; attacked on the Penobscot, 62; burned, *ib.*

Adams, Captain H. A., disloyal conduct of, iv. 117.

Adams, John, member of first Marine Committee, i. 36.

Adams, Samuel, and the Boston tea-party, i. 12.

Adelaide, Federal transport, iv. 100.

Adeline, American brig, recaptured from the British, ii. 74.

Admiral Duff, British privateer, blown up by the *Protector*, i. 207.

Adriana, American brigantine, Ambassador to Holland sails on, iv. 153.

Adventure, British ship, burned by Paul Jones, i. 78.

Africa, British ship-of-the-line, ii. 55.

Africa, making the coast of, safe for American traders, iii. 340–358.

Aiken, Southern revenue cutter, converted into the Confederate privateer *Petrel*, iv. 93.

Alabama, Confederate privateer, off Galveston, iv. 357; known as *No. 290*, 430; Captain Semmes appointed to command, 431; cruises off the Azores, Martinique, Galveston, Cape Town, and the East Indies, 432–436; encounters the *Kearsarge* at Cherbourg, 436; comparison of their armaments, 437; the fight, 438–441; prizes taken by, 447.

Alabama claims, iv. 430.

Albatross, Federal gun-boat, passes the batteries of Port Hudson, iv. 358.

Albemarle, Confederate ironclad ram, iv. 456; laid up at Plymouth, N. C., 457; blown up by Lieutenant Cushing, 461.

Albemarle Sound, N. C., a Confederate privateer resort, iv. 94.

Albert Adams, Federal merchantship, captured by the *Sumter*, iv. 415.

Alden, Captain James, iv. 386.

Alden, Commander James, iv. 314.

Alert, British corvette, surrenders to the *Essex*, ii. 42; attempt to rescue from Porter, 43, 44.

Alert, British cutter, captures the *Lexington*, i. 119, 120.
Alexander, Captain Charles, i. 66.
Alexandria, British frigate, ii. 359.
Alexandria, Red River, Admiral Porter's squadrons arrive at, iv. 370.
Alfred, American flagship, sent to France, i. 130; captured, 132, 133.
Algerian fleet sent after Yankee merchantmen, iii. 341.
Algerian Navy, strength of the, iii. 344.
Algerian pirates encouraged by England, i. 308, 309.
Algiers, Africa, tribute paid to by the United States, iii. 339; by England, 340.
Algiers, Dey of, ransom paid to, i. 309, 310; treatment of Americans by, iii. 340, 341.
Algiers, harbor defences of, iii. 345.
Allen, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Allen, Captain William Henry, ii. 360; carries the American Minister to France, 361; sails into the English Channel, *ib.*; captures a wine ship from Portugal, 362, 363; encounters the *Pelican*, 362–364; his ship surrendered, 367; dies in Mill Prison Hospital, 371.
Allen, Lieutenant William Howard, takes charge of the ship, ii. 364; continues the fight, 367; killed in an engagement with pirates, iii. 333.
Alliance, American frigate, detailed to carry Lafayette home, i. 232; fouls the *Bonhomme Richard*, 234; takes a valuable prize, 236; fires into the *Bonhomme Richard*, 254; flight of Paul Jones on the, 275; cruises on the French coast, 297; narrow escape of, 298; sails from Havana with specie, *ib.*; attacked by the *Sybille*, 299; sold, 303.
Alligator, American tender, surrendered to the British, iii. 235.
Alligator, American schooner, defeats an attack at Cole's Island, ii. 419.
Alvarado, Mexican port, Commodore Conner attempts to take, iii. 410; captured by Lieutenant Charles G. Hunter, 428.
Alwyn, John C., Lieutenant in the *Java* fight, mortally wounded, ii. 166, 171, 172.
American citizens in foreign countries, iii. 385, 386.
American commerce, English policy toward, i. 306, 307, 384; protected by Portugal, 307; menace to, iv. 412.
American cruisers in British waters, i. 112–133.
American flag, first salute given to, i. 69; designed, 134; first hoisted, 135; first saluted by a foreign power, 138; protected by Portugal, 307; a shield for an infamous traffic, iii. 361; a Chinese assault on, 380.
American frontier in 1812, ii. 262.
American Navy, first existence of, i. 1; founders of, 37; first ships of, in commission, 39–43; resolutions of Congress founding it, 41; first officers and first ships of, 39–43; origin of the, 1–47; first cruise of the, 48–62; first squadron poorly manned and inefficient, 49–53; along shore in 1776, 63–83; mismanagement in, 159; at the time of the Declaration of Independence, 300; building a new navy, 303; strength of, at commencement of hostilities with France, 315; almost extinct, 396; reduced to a peace footing, 398; discreditable lack of, ii. 26; increase of, 356; development of, from 1815 to 1859, iv. 1–9; personnel of the, in 1859, 24–26; number of men who took part with the Southern States, 27; value of men from Northern ports and the Great Lakes, 36;

a nautical curiosity shop, 37 ; ferryboats as naval ships, *ib.* ; first great naval expedition of the War of the Rebellion, 168 ; modern, sketch of, 523–554 ; in 1885, condition of, 523.
American prisoners in England, i. 122; in Tripoli, 345, 358.
American seamen, impressment of, ii. 18 ; courage and skill of, 357.
American sea-power in 1812, ii. 21.
American shipping and French cruisers, i. 314.
American squadron, career of the first, i. 60.
Ammen, Captain Daniel, at Port Royal, iv. 163 ; Commander of the *Patapsco*, 480.
Amphitrite, American pilot-boat, attacks a French privateer, ii. 34.
Amy, American bark, Blackford, at Rio Janeiro, iv. 548.
Anacostia, Federal screw steamer, at Acquia Creek, iv. 81.
Anarchy in the West Indies and along the Spanish Main, iii. 325.
Andrea Doria, brig of first American Navy, i. 39 ; in the first naval battle of the Revolution, 58 ; ordered to sea, 64 ; fight with brig *Racehorse*, 68, 69 ; burned, 70.
Andrews, Major W. S. G., Commander of Fort Hatteras, iv. 107.
Anglo-Saxon aggressiveness, iii. 391.
Anglo-Saxon cheer, the, ii. 308.
Angostura, Venezuela, Commodore Perry arrives at, iii. 329.
Anthracite coal used by blockade-runners, iv. 55.
Antonio, Cape, Captain Kearny of the *Enterprise* captures pirates near, iii. 331.
Aquidaban, Brizilian rebel monitor, iv. 548.
Arbuthnot, Captain James, captured by the *Wasp*, iii. 93–96.
Arcade, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Archer, captured by Captain Read of the *Tacony*, iv. 424.
Argus, American sloop, ii. 360 ; carries the American Minister to France, 361 ; cruises in the English Channel, *ib.* ; too successful for her safety, 362 ; encounters *Pelican*, 362, 363 ; her sails become unmanageable, 364 ; surrenders, 367 ; contemporary view of the battle, 369 ; taken by a prize crew to Plymouth, 371.
Argus, American frigate, captures six prizes, ii. 151.
Argus, American cruiser, in the attack on Tripoli, i. 374.
Ariadne, British man-of-war, captures the *Alfred*, i. 132, 133.
Ariel, American schooner, ii. 292.
Arkansas, Confederate ram, skirmish in the Yazoo River, iv. 342, 343 ; machinery gets out of order, 343 ; attacks Farragut's squadron, 344.
Arkansas Post, naval force sent to help capture, iv. 351.
Armada, British liner, chases the *Wasp*, iii. 92.
Armament and construction of gun-boats, iv. 246.
Armament of battle-ships from 1812 to 1859, iv. 24.
Armor-plated ships, first use of, iv. 9, 10.
Armstrong, Commodore James, surrenders Pensacola Navy Yard to Confederates, iv. 112 ; suspended for five years, 113.
Arnold, Benedict, invades Canada, i. 84 ; builds a fleet, 89; fight on Lake Champlain, 92–94 ; character of, as a fighter, 105.
Arsenals established in New York State, ii. 264.
Asp, American ship, ii. 352.
Atalanta, British brig, surrenders to the *Alliance*, i. 298.
Atalanta, British ship, captured by the *Wasp*, iii. 100.

Atalanta, British frigate, ii. 16.
Atlanta, formerly the *Fingal*, Confederate ironclad, iv. 488 ; surrenders to the *Weehawken*, 489.
Atlanta, United States cruiser, iv. 533.
Atlantic, British letter-of-marque whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 9. See *Essex, Jr.*
Audience, an intensely interested, iii. 152.
Augusta, Federal ship, in Port Royal squadron, iv. 172.
Augusta, armed merchantman, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Aulick, Captain James, sent to Japan in 1851, iii. 443 ; recalled on false charges, *ib.*
Avon, British brig-sloop, captured by the *Wasp* (3), iii. 93–96.
Aylwin, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Bache, Lieutenant G. M., iv. 369.
Badajos, rapacity of English veterans in the streets of, iii. 134.
Bahama, British merchant-ship, officers and crew of the *Alabama* taken in the, to Terceira, iv. 431.
Bahama Islands, a resort for contraband traders in the Civil War, iv. 48.
Bahia, Brazil, Captain Bainbridge paroles his prisoners at, ii. 167, 175.
Bailey, Lieutenant-colonel Joseph, saves Admiral Porter's squadron, iv. 371–376 ; receives thanks of Congress, 376.
Bailey, Captain Theodorus, at New Orleans, iv. 316 ; commands first division of Farragut's squadron, 324; sent ashore to deliver Farragut's letter, 338.
Bainbridge, Captain William, i. 316 ; surrenders to the French frigate *Insurgent*, *ib.*; Captain of the *Voluntaire* refuses to accept his sword. *ib.*; deceives the French officer, 317 ; sent to Tripoli in charge of the *Essex*, 335 ; chases a Tripolitan corsair, 341 ; loses his ship on a reef, 343 ; court-martialed, 344 ; a prisoner in Tripoli, 345 ; communicates with American fleet, 346 ; a shot penetrates his prison, 368 ; remonstrates with the Navy Department of Madison's administration, ii. 26 ; cruising in Brazil, 152 ; fight with the British frigate *Java*, 153–173 ; wounded, 155 ; conducts his ship while his wounds are being dressed, 156 ; paroles 378 of the *Java's* crew, 167; blows up the *Java*, 173 ; his dream realized, 172, 173 ; his character illustrated, 177 ; insulted at Barcelona, iii. 311–313.
Bainbridge, Midshipman Joseph, his duel with the Secretary of Sir Alexander Ball, iii. 307–311; captures a Carthaginian privateer, iii. 65 ; attacked and captured by the *Orpheus* and *Shelburne*, 65, 66.
Baker, Captain Thomas H., iv. 89.
Baldwin, Lieutenant, i. 66.
Ball, Sir Alexander, iii. 307.
Ballard, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Ballard, Midshipman Edward J., ii. 206.
Baltimore, American frigate, five men of the, impressed in the British service, 401.
Bankhead, Captain J. P., at Port Royal, iv. 163.
Banks, General Nathaniel Prentiss, sent on expedition to Shreveport, La., iv. 368.
Banshee, the first steel blockade-runner, iv. 57.
Barbary pirates encouraged by England, i. 307 ; war with, 333, 334.
Barclay, British whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 8.
Barclay, Captain Robert H., appears off Erie, ii. 289 ; fond of festivities, 291; misses the American fleet, 292 ; opposes Perry,

296; superiority of his ships, 298; determines to meet Perry, 302; awaits the American squadron, 306; fires the first gun, 308; surrenders, 324, 326; loses a second arm in the battle, 330.
Barnard, Captain Tim, iii. 187; captures nineteen prizes, *ib.*
Barney, Captain Joshua, sketch of, i. 209–215; has command of the clipper-schooner *Rossie*, ii. 245; captures by, 246–248; commands a fleet in Chesapeake Bay in 1813, 403; attacked by the British on the Patuxent River, 403–409; Captain Samuel Miller and Colonel Wadsworth sent to his assistance, 409, 410; moves up the Patuxent River, 413; burns his fleet, 414; wounded, 416.
Barney, Major William B., acts as aid to his father, ii. 406; in command of cutter *Scorpion*, 408.
Barossa, British frigate, ii. 395.
Barreaut, Captain, chases American ships, i. 316; recalled by Captain St. Laurent, 317–319.
Barriers on the Mississippi to prevent Farragut's advance, iv. 320; broken down by the *Itasca*, 323.
Barron, Captain James, sent to Tripoli in charge of the *President*, i. 335; with Stephen Decatur, iii. 318–322; restored to active service, 323.
Barron, Captain Samuel, sent to Tripoli in charge of the *Philadelphia*, i. 335.
Barron, Flag Officer Samuel, captured at Fort Hatteras, iv. 106.
Barry, Captain John, i. 39; commands American brig *Lexington*, 63; cruises off Virginia capes, 64; encounters British tender *Edward*, 64; sinks the *Effingham*, 188; captures and destroys the schooner *Alert*, 189, 190; appointed to the *Raleigh*, *ib.*; chases the *Unicorn*, 191; loses the *Raleigh*, 194.
Bashaw of Tripoli, treachery of, i. 335, 336; refuses to make a treaty, 340; agrees to give up prisoners, 378.
Bassett, Lieutenant F. S., opinion of Commodore Hopkins, i. 61.
Batteaux, travelling in, ii. 263.
Battle of Bunker Hill, i. 26; Champlain, 92–111; of Fort Pillow, iv. 298; of Grand Gulf, 367; of Lake Erie, ii. 309–325; of Lexington, i. 14; of Memphis, iv. 298–307; of New Orleans (in the Civil War), 326–340; of Pittsburg Landing, 284.
Baton Rouge surrenders to Captain Craven of the *Brooklyn*, iv. 340.
Baudara de Sangare, a private vessel, captured by the *Shark*, iii. 332.
Baury, Lieutenant Frederick, iii. 81.
Bay Point. See *Fort Beauregard*.
Bazely, Lieutenant John, captures the *Lexington*, i. 119, 120.
Beagle, American ship, captures Cape Cruz, iii. 334.
Beaufort, Confederate gun-boat, takes crew off the *Congress* after she surrenders to the *Merrimac*, iv. 208.
Beauregard, Confederate ram, attacks the *Queen of the West* at Fort Pillow, iv. 301; rammed and sunk by the *Monarch*, 302.
Bell, Henry H., iv. 314.
Belligerent ships, rules and orders regarding, issued by British Government, iv. 411.
Belligerents, rights of, iv. 86.
Belmont, on the Mississippi, battle at, iv. 251; the Confederates compel Grant to retreat, 252.
Belvidera, British frigate, encounters the *President*, ii. 29; escapes, 32.
Ben. Dunning, Federal merchantship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Benham, Admiral A. E. K.,

prompt action of, at Rio Janeiro, iv. 548.
Bentham, Commander George, attacks the *General Armstrong* in the harbor of Fayal, iii. 187–199; sets fire to the *Armstrong*, 200.
Benton snag-boat, converted by Eads into an armored vessel, iv. 246–249.
Benton, Porter's flagship before Vicksburg, iv. 363.
Benton, Federal gun-boat, Lieutenant-commander J. A. Greer, iv. 369.
Berceau, French frigate, fights with the *Boston*, i. 328; returned to France, 330.
Beresford, Captain John Poer, recaptures the *Frolic* from the *Wasp*, ii. 118.
Berkeley, British minister at Washington, recalled and promoted, ii. 2.
Bermudas a basis for contraband trade during the Civil War, iv. 48.
Betsey, British bark, captured by Captain Alexander, i. 66.
Biddle, Captain Nicholas, i. 64; commands the *Randolph*, 160; attacks the *Yarmouth*, 162; Lieutenant on the *Wasp* (No. 2), ii. 111; leads the boarders, *ib.*; hauls down the flag of the *Frolic*, 112; appointed to command the *Hornet*, 272; commands the *Macedonian*, 331; sent to the Pacific Coast, 401; sent to Japan to negotiate a treaty of peace, 440.
Bienville, Federal ship, in Port Royal squadron, iv. 172.
Black Hawk, Federal gun-boat, iv. 369.
Black Prince, purchased by Naval Committee, i. 39.
Black Rock, near Buffalo, Lieutenant Elliott establishes a navy yard at, ii. 273.
Black Snake, British gun-boat, iii. 126.
Blake, Captain H. C., iv. 432.
Blakely, Master-commandant Johnston, ii. 375; fights with the *Reindeer* and the *Avon*, iii. 85–96; captures the *Atalanta*, 100; lost with his ship, 103.
Blockade-runner, legal status of, iv. 57, 58.
Blockade-runners, chiefly in the hands of the British, iv. 48; reckless loading of, 61; profits of, 63, 64.
Blockading the Southern ports, iv. 28–30; no force available to blockade at the beginning of the war, 32; lack of ships and men, 34; Congress slow to appreciate the need of a navy, 35.
"Blood is thicker than water," iii. 381, 382.
Blythe, Captain Samuel, attacks the *Enterprise*, ii. 375; killed, 379; buried at Portland, 385.
Board of Admiralty, i. 158.
Boggs, Commander Charles S., iv. 314.
Bolton, American bomb-brig, i. 56.
Bonhomme Richard, American ship, i. 227; origin of the name, 228; fitted out by Jones, 229; mixed crew of, 230; Richard Dale as master's mate on, *ib.*; the *Alliance* runs foul of, 234; accident to, 235; meets the *Serapis*, 243; fight with the *Serapis*, 245–259; comparative strength of the two ships, 265; after the surrender, 269–272; sinking of the ship, 272.
Bonita, American schooner, in attack on Alvarado, iii. 410.
Bonne Citoyenne, British war-ship, blockaded in the harbor of Bahia, ii. 179; cowardice of Captain Greene, 180.
Borer, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Boston, American frigate, i. 286, 287.
Boston, American ship, fights the *Berceau*, Captain Senez, i. 328, 329.
Boston Port Bill, i. 13.

Boston, tea destroyed in harbor of, i. 13; press-gang riots in, 395.
Boston, United States cruiser, iv. 533.
Boutelle, Mr., of the Federal Coast Survey, replaces the buoys at Port Royal, iv. 171.
Bowling Green, Kentucky, Confederate position at, untenable after surrender of Fort Henry, iv. 266.
Boxer, British brig, attacks the *Enterprise*, ii. 375; surrenders, 379; crew of, 382; decision of the British court on the loss of the, 384.
Bragg, Confederate ship, captured at Fort Pillow, iv. 302.
Breckenridge, General, attacks the Federal forces at Baton Rouge, iv. 344.
Breese, Lieutenant-commander K. R., iv. 369.
Breeze, Chaplain, on the *Lawrence* in the battle of Lake Erie, ii. 317.
British Government, attitude of the, toward African pirates, iii. 340.
British grab at the Valley of the Mississippi, iii. 229, 230.
British merchants and the American war, i. 112.
British Navy in American waters, i. 195.
British waters, rights of belligerents in, iv. 411.
Brock, Sir Isaac, his view of the English possession of America, ii. 279.
Broke, British gun-boat, iii. 143.
Broke, Captain Philip Vere, Commodore British squadron, ii. 55; challenges Lawrence of the *Chesapeake* to fight, "ship to ship," ii. 203, 204; boards the *Chesapeake*, 214; is wounded, 217; becomes delirious, 221, 225; made a baronet, 226; death of, 229.
Brooke, Lieutenant John M., assigned to assist in designing an ironclad, iv. 184.
Brooklyn, screw sloop, iv. 314.
Brooklyn, Federal gun-boat, iv. 386.
Brown, Lieutenant George, iv. 389.
Brown, Captain Isaac N., iv. 342; skirmish with the Federal fleet in the Yazoo River, *ib.*; attacks Farragut's squadron, 344; supports Breckenridge at Baton Rouge, *ib.*
Brown, Lieutenant James, ii. 217.
Browne, Lieutenant G. W., iv. 370.
Brownson, Captain Willard H., at Rio Janeiro, iv. 548; on the coast of Mexico, 553.
Bruinsburg, Federal army crosses from, to Grand Gulf, iv. 364.
Bryant, Captain N. C., before Fort Pillow, iv. 290.
Buchanan, Flag Officer Franklin, iv. 188; his difficulty in finding a crew, 195; wounded, 210; his report of the fight, *ib.*; Confederate fleet of, at Mobile, 380; sends the *Tennessee* into action, 399; wounded, 402.
Budd, Lieutenant George, ii. 206, 218.
Bullock, Commander James D., supervises construction of the *Alabama*, iv. 430.
Bunker Hill, battle of, i. 26.
Bunker Hill, American privateer, ii. 394.
Burleton, Admiral Sir George, chases the *Hornet*, iii. 282.
Burnside, General A. E., sent to capture Roanoke Island, iv. 109.
Burrows, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Burrows, Lieutenant William, appointed to command the *Enterprise*, ii. 375; encounters the *Boxer*, 375–377; is mortally wounded, 377; receives the surrender of the *Boxer*, 379.
Bushnell, David, invents first American submarine torpedo boat, i. 164; sketch of his life, 180–184.
Butler, General Benjamin F., sent

to attack the forts on Hatteras Islands, iv. 100; his report at, 107; occupies New Orleans, 338, 339; his plan for blowing up Fort Fisher, 508–510.
Byron, Captain of, chased by the *President*, ii. 29–32.
Cabot, brig of first American Navy, i. 39; commanded by Captain Elisha Hinman, i. 66; fired by her captain, 163.
Cairo, armor-plated Federal gunboat, built by Eads, iv. 245; Captain N. C. Bryant commands, 290; runs by torpedoes in the Yazoo River expedition, iv. 350.
Calbreth, Peter, one of the capturers of the *Margaretta*, i. 17.
Caldwell, Lieutenant C. H. B., iv. 314; breaks barriers across the Mississippi, 323.
Caleb Cushing, Federal revenue cutter, cut out and burnt by the *Archer*, iv. 424.
Caledonia, British brig, captured by Lieutenant Elliott, ii. 279.
California, a bone of contention between Americans and English, in 1842, iii. 387, 388; operations that insured the acquisition of, iii. 387, 388.
Canada invaded by American troops, i. 84; annexation of, agitated in 1812, ii. 20; invasions of, for resenting British aggressions, ii. 263.
Canning, British prime minister, diplomacy of, in regard to the *Chesapeake* affair, ii. 1.
Canton, China, American fleet sent to, to protect American interests, iii. 380.
Cape Cruz, South America, a pirate resort captured by the *Greyhound* and *Beagle*, iii. 334.
Carden, Captain John Surnam, i. 389; cruel treatment of sailors, *ib.*; cruises in the Azores, ii. 121; falls in with the *United States*, 122; fight with, 125–134; Decatur refuses to receive his sword, 139.
Caribbean Sea a nest for pirates, iii. 326.
Carleton, Sir Guy, his supplies captured by Paul Jones, i. 79; confidence of, 85; his fleet at St. John's, 87; fight on Lake Champlain, 92–94.
Carleton, British schooner, ii. 100.
Carnation, British brig, attacks the *General Armstrong* in the neutral port of Fayal, Azores, iii. 187–200.
Caroband Bank, South America, fight between the *Hornet* and *Peacock* near, ii. 181.
Caroline, American schooner, attacks the British camp at Villeré's Plantation on the Mississippi, iii. 239; is fired and abandoned, 240.
Carondelet, James B. Eads's shipyard at, iv. 243.
Carondelet, armor-plated Federal gun-boat, built by Eads, iv. 245, 369; goes aground outside Fort Henry, 265; gets free, 266; shells Fort Donelson, 268, 271; disabled before Fort Donelson, 271; gun bursts on, 272; in Porter's fleet before Vicksburg, 363.
Carronades, description and value of, ii. 36–38.
Carronades (short guns) out of use, iii. 141.
Carrying trade of the Mediterranean, England's tribute to the Dey of Algiers for, iii. 340; after the War of 1812, *ib.*
Cassin, Lieutenant Stephen, iii. 139.
Castilian, English brig-sloop, iii. 93.
Catherine, British ship, captured by Lieutenant Downes, iii. 10.
Cat-o'-ninetails used to enforce orders on British ships, i. 389.
Catskill, Federal ironclad, iv. 480.
Cayuga, Federal screw gun-boat, iv. 314.
Centipede, American gun-boat, iii. 141.

Centipede, British launch, ii. 398 ; sunk, 400.
Ceremonies connected with first American fleet, i. 44–46.
Ceres, British man-of-war, captures the *Alfred*, i. 132, 133.
Chads, Lieutenant, in the fight with the *Constitution*, takes command when Captain Lambert is mortally wounded, ii. 165.
Champlain, Lake, naval battle on, i. 92–100 ; reflections on the battle, 105–111.
Champlin, Stephen, in the battle of Lake Erie, ii. 326 ; fires the last shot of the battle, 327.
Chandeleur Islands, the British forces arrive at, to attack New Orleans, iii. 230.
Chaplin, Lieutenant J. C., attacks the forts at Acquia Creek, iv. 82.
Charles City, Ark., attack on, by Federal gun-boats and an Indiana regiment, iv. 307.
Charleston, United States cruiser, plans of, imported, iv. 531.
Charleston, S. C., defences of, iv. 467 ; bombardment of, iv. 480–502.
Charlton, British whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 14.
Charwell, British brig, iii. 110.
Chase, Major W. H., and Colonel Lomax, capture the Pensacola Navy Yard, iv. 112.
Chasseur, Baltimore clipper, attacks the *St. Lawrence*, British war-schooner, iii. 204.
Chatsworth, American brigantine, slave-ship captured by Lieutenant Foote, iii. 366.
Chauncey, Commodore Isaac, appointed to command the forces on the Great Lakes, ii. 270 ; attacks Kingston, *ib.*; attacks Toronto, 341 ; attacks Fort George, 342 ; returns to Sackett's Harbor, 348 ; makes another assault on Toronto, 349 ; Sir James Yeo's squadron appears, *ib.* ; jockeying for position, 350 ; Chauncey opens fire, 351 ; returns to the attack, 352 ; misses the great opportunity of his life, 353 ; operations of, on Lake Ontario, iii. 113–129.
Cherub, British war-ship, accompanies the *Phœbe* in the attack on the *Essex*, iii. 25.
Chesapeake, American frigate, built, i. 312.
Chesapeake, Lawrence appointed to command of, ii. 197 ; her crew, 198 ; the ship reputed to be unlucky, 199 ; is fitted out for a voyage to intercept British ships, 200 ; is blockaded by the *Shannon* in Boston Harbor, 203; goes out to meet the *Shannon*, 1813, 204; crew mutinous, 205 ; closes down on the *Shannon*, 206 ; the battle, 209 ; the *Chesapeake* is boarded, 214 ; hand-to-hand fight, 217 ; the ship is captured, 221; taken to Halifax, 222 ; comparison of the two ships, 229.
Chickasaw, Federal monitor, iv. 386.
Chickasaw, Federal gun-boat, shells Fort Gaines, and compels it to surrender, iv. 405.
Chicora, Confederate ironclad, built at Charleston, iv. 473 ; fires on the *Keystone State* and captures her, 475.
Chillicothe, Federal gun-boat, iv. 369.
Chinese assault on the American flag, a, iii. 380.
Chinese war of 1856, American interests involved in, and fleet sent to protect them, iii. 379–382.
Chippeway, British schooner, in battle of Lake Erie, ii. 297.
Chubb, British ship, disabled and surrenders to Macdonough, iii. 156.
Chubb, British gun-boat, iii. 143.
Cincinnati, armor-plated Federal gun-boat, built by Eads, iv. 245 ; flagship of Commodore Foote before Fort Henry,

261; Captain R. N. Stembel commands, 289; throws the first shell into Fort Pillow, 293; attacked by Confederate rams, *ib.*; the *Mound City* goes to the rescue of, 294; sinks, *ib.*
Circassian, blockade-runner, captured off Havana by the Fulton ferryboat *Somerset*, iv. 37.
Civilization promoted by Anglo-Saxon aggressiveness, iii. 391.
Clarence, merchant-ship, captured by Captain Maffitt, of the cruiser *Florida*, iv. 424; placed under command of Lieutenant Read, *ib.*; burnt, *ib.*
Coaling stations, need of, by Federal war-ships in Southern waters, iv. 161.
Cocke, Captain W. H., iii. 333; fired on and killed by a Porto Rican fort, *ib.*
Collier, Sir Ralph, K. C. B., iii. 260.
Collins, Captain Napoleon, at Port Royal, iv. 163; commanding the *Wachusett*, captures the *Florida* in Bahia Harbor, iv. 424.
"Colonial Navy," distinguished from temporary cruisers, i. 28, 29.
Colorado, United States screw frigate, launched, iv. 15.
Columbia, American frigate, attacks and bombards the Malay town of Quallah Battoo, iii. 375–379.
Columbia, United States cruiser, iv. 534.
Columbiad, description of, iv. 119.
Columbus, successful cruise of Captain Whipple in the, i. 66.
Columbus, American ship-of-the-line, sent to Japan, iii. 440.
Columbus, Ky., Confederate position at, becomes untenable after surrender of Fort Henry, iv. 266.
Columbus, on the Mississippi, Confederates evacuate, iv. 275.
Comet, American privateer, ii. 252.
Commander-in-chief of the Navy, title held by Commodore Hopkins only, i. 62.
Condor, blockade-runner, wreck of, at Fort Fisher, iv. 511.
Conestoga, merchant-vessel, purchased by Commander Rodgers, iv. 241; Captain Phelps appointed to command, 251.
Confederacy, American frigate, i. 287.
Confederacy, American packet, captured by the English, i. 298.
Confiance, British frigate, iii. 142; flagship of Captain Downie in the battle of Lake Champlain, 153; disabled and surrendered to the *Saratoga*, 165.
Congress, American galley, i. 89; Arnold's flagship, 99; covers retreat at Crown Point, 104; burned by Arnold, 105.
Congress, American frigate, built, i. 312; opens fire on the ironclad *Merrimac* in Hampton Roads, iv. 200; grounded, 207; two Confederate gun-boats open fire on her, *ib.*; Lieutenant Pendergrast surrendered her to the *Merrimac*, 208; hot shot fired at her by the *Merrimac*, 209; her magazine explodes, 215.
Connecticut troops desert, i. 30.
Conner, Commodore David, lands a force at Point Isabel, iii. 409; his fleet not fitted for shallow waters, 410; his conduct of the seige of Vera Cruz, 418.
Connyngham, Captain Gustavus, i. 123; captures prizes on the French coast, 124; commission taken from him, 125; takes command of the *Revenge*, 126; his ship injured, 127; refits in English port, 128; gets provisions in an Irish port, *ib.*; sails for America, *ib.*; denounced as a pirate, 129; cruel treatment of, in English prison, *ib.*
Constellation, American frigate, built, i. 312; Captain Thomas Truxton commands, 316, 319; battle with French frigate *In-*

surgent, 320; discipline on board of, 322, 323; battle with French frigate *Vengeance*, 323–325; Captain Charles Gordon appointed to command in Decatur's fleet, iii. 343.
Constitution, United States frigate, built, i. 312; flagship in the attack on Tripoli, 367; called a "pine box" by Englishmen, 380; Captain Isaac Hull disputes with the Captain of the British warship *Havana*, ii. 13, 14; is chased by two frigates, *ib.*; ship prepares for action, *ib.*; frigates retreat, 16; her escape from a British squadron, 53–69; "a bunch of pine boards," 73; fight with *Guerrière*, 76–95; comparative strength of the two ships, 96; return to Boston, 101; cruising off Brazil, 152; falls in with the *Java*, 153, 155–173; attempt of the *Java* to board, 158; the London *Times* on the victory, 176; Lawrence applies for the command of, 197; laid up at Boston, iii. 241; goes to sea again, 242; captures the war-schooner *Picton*, *ib.*; falls in with the British frigate *La Pique*, *ib.*; the British ship runs away, 243; is chased by the *Junon* and *Tenedos*, 244; returns to Boston, 245; captures the *Lord Nelson*, *ib.*; chases the *Elizabeth* and captures the *Susan*, *ib.*; is chased by the *Elizabeth* and *Tiber*, 246; fight with the *Cyane* and *Levant*, 247–256; sails to Porto Praya, 260; attacked by three British frigates, 261; her fighting days over, 268; plan of, iv. 537.
Continental Congress, effect on the, of the British vengeance on Portland, i. 26.
Continental Naval Board, i. 158.
Contraband trade in the Civil War, iv. 48–52.
Cooke, Captain. See *Albemarle*.
Coquette, American merchant schooner, plundered by the Porto Rico privateer *Palmira*, iii. 332.
Cornwallis, Lieutenant-general Lord, released from imprisonment in exchange for Henry Laurens, iv. 154.
Corpus Christi, Texas, captured by Farragut, iv. 357.
Cossack, Federal transport, iv. 478.
Cottineau, Captain Denis Nicholas, i. 232.
Cotton-mills of the world shut down during the War of the Rebellion, iv. 47.
Countess of Scarborough attacks Paul Jones's fleet off Flamborough Head, i. 243; surrender to the *Pallas*, 267.
Couronne, French ironclad, witnesses the *Alabama-Kearsarge* fight, iv. 438.
Couthouy, Lieutenant S. P., iv. 369.
Cox, William, midshipman on the *Chesapeake*, ii. 206.
Coxetter, Captain Louis M., iv. 91–93.
Craighead's Point, shells thrown into Fort Pillow from, iv. 290.
Craney Island, Captain Tattnall fires and blows up the *Merrimac* on, iv. 236–237.
Craven, Captain Thomas Tunis, iv. 314; sinks with his ship, 394.
Craven, Commander T. A. M., iv. 386.
Crawford, William H., American minister to France, ii. 361.
Cricket, Federal gun-boat, iv. 370.
Crosby, Lieutenant Pierce, iv. 315.
Crown Point, retreat of Benedict Arnold to, i. 103; account of the roads and distances to, from New York, 109.
Crowninshield, George, Jr., privateersman, brings home the bodies of Captain Lawrence and Lieutenant Ludlow, ii. 225.
Croyable, French gun-ship, captured off the Delaware, and renamed the *Retaliation*, i. 316, 400.

Cruisers, Confederate, tales of the, iv. 407–451.
Cuba, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Cumberland, Federal sailing sloop-of-war, opens fire on the ironclad *Merrimac*, iv. 200; is rammed by the *Merrimac*, 201; in a sinking condition, 202; continues firing as she goes down, 203.
Cumberland Head, Plattsburg Bay, Macdonough's squadron at, iii. 149.
Dabney, John B., American consul at Fayal, iii. 187; his report on the fight between the *Carnation* and the *General Armstrong*, 195, 196, 198–201.
Dacres, Captain James Richard, ii. 55; surrenders to Captain Hull, 94.
Dahlgren, Rear-admiral John Adolph, his smooth-bore gun introduced, iv. 489.
Dahlgren, Admiral John A. B., relieves Dupont of his command, iv. 489.
Dale, Commodore Richard, master's mate on *Lexington*, i. 68; escape of, from English prison, 123; joins Paul Jones's fleet, 230; resourceful conduct of, 256, 260–262; wounded, 266; gallant conduct on the *Trumbull*, 295–297; placed in command of squadron in the Mediterranean, 334.
Dartmoor Prison, Rev. Joseph Bates imprisoned in, iii. 294.
Dartmouth, merchant-ship, tea thrown from, in Boston Harbor, i. 13.
Dash, privateer of Baltimore, captures schooner *Whiting* in Chesapeake Bay, ii. 241.
Dauphin, American ship, captured by Algerian pirates, i. 309.
Dauphin Island, Mobile, iv. 379; Federal troops landed on, 385.
"Davids," torpedo boats, first used at Charleston, iv. 497; derivation of name, 498.
Davis, Captain Charles, relieves Commodore Foote, iv. 289; his inactivity, 293.
Davis, Captain Charles H., replaces the buoys at Port Royal, iv. 171.
Davis, Jefferson, proclamation inviting applications for letters of marque, iv. 85.
Davis, Gunner's Mate John, heroism of, iv. 110; promoted and honored, 111.
Davyson, Captain Thomas, surrenders to the *Providence*, i. 282, 283.
Dead Sea, exploration of the, iii. 464.
Deane, American frigate, with the *Boston*, captures six prizes, i. 284, 287.
Deane, Silas, member of first Marine Committee, i. 36; American commissioner to France with Franklin, i. 117.
De Camp, Commander John, iv. 314.
Decatur, American privateer, throws her guns overboard, ii. 75.
Decatur, Lieutenant James, in the attack on the city of Tripoli, i. 361; killed by the Tripolitans, 362.
Decatur, Lieutenant Stephen, Jr., i. 346; captures the *Mastico*, *ib.*; sails on the *Mastico* to set fire to the *Philadelphia*, 348–361; made a captain, 358; in the attack on the city of Tripoli, 361; his encounter with a Tripolitan captain, 363, 364; falls in with the British ships *Eurydice* and *Atalanta*, ii. 16; cruises in the Azores in the *United States*, 121; encounters the *Macedonian*, 122; fights the second frigate battle of the War of 1812, 125–134; his personal direction of the guns, 128; surrender of the British frigate, 133; ball given to Decatur and

his officers in New York, 149; gold medal given by Congress to, 150; transferred to the *President*, iii. 212; ordered to cruise in the East Indies, 215; chased by the British fleet, 216; lightens his ship, 217; addresses his crew, 218; attempts to retreat, 221; ordered to cruise in the South Atlantic, 271; his duelling experiences, 307–315; his fatal duel with Commodore Barron, 318–321; his death, 322; a squadron under his command sent to Africa, 343; his treaty with the Dey, 347–355; compels the Dey to pay indemnity, 355; goes to Tripoli and compels the Bashaw to settle, 357.

Deerhound, English yacht, witnesses the *Alabama-Kearsarge* fight off Cherbourg, France, iv. 438; assists in picking up the crew of the *Alabama*, 441.

Defence, Connecticut cruiser, captures two transports, i. 203, 204.

Defiance, Confederate ironclad, abandoned by her crew at New Orleans, iv. 337.

De Gama, Saldanha, Brazilian rebel admiral, iv. 548.

De Kalb, armor-plated Federal gun-boat, built by Eads, first called the *St. Louis*, iv. 245; takes part in capture of Arkansas Post, iv. 351.

Delaware, United States frigate, i. 316.

Demologos, Fulton's first steam war-ship, iv. 4, 11.

Desertions from British ships, i. 394.

De Soto, Federal boat, added to Ellet's command, iv. 351; burned, 352.

Detroit, American brig, captured by the British, ii. 274; recaptured by Lieutenant Elliott, 276; runs aground on Squaw Island, 278; British again capture her, *ib.*; the Americans destroy her, 279.

Detroit, United States cruiser, at Rio Janeiro, iv. 548; fires on the *Guanabara*, 553.

Diadem, British frigate, strength and armament of, iv. 23.

Diamond Reef, near Cape Hatteras, iv. 165.

Dickenson, Captain James, attacks the *Hornet*, iii. 273; is killed in the fight, 276.

Diligence, British schooner, sent to capture Captain Jeremiah O'Brien, i. 23.

Diligent, English brig, surrenders to the *Providence*, i. 282, 283.

Discipline on board American frigate *Constellation*, i. 322.

Discord fomented by England between the States of the Union, i. 384.

Divided We Fall, American privateer, ii. 253.

Dixie, Confederate privateer, iv. 93.

Dolphin, American cutter, purchased by Franklin and other commissioners, i. 117.

Dolphin, American privateer, ii. 242.

Dolphin, United States cruiser, iv. 531.

Donaldson, Commander Edward, iv. 389; of the *Sciota*, 315.

"Don't tread on me," the significant motto, i. 2, 46.

Douglas, Hon. Captain George, iii. 247; surrenders, 255.

Douglas, Lord Howard, his views on armor-clad ships, iv. 198.

Downes, Lieutenant John, sent on a cruise in the *Georgiana*, iii. 10; captures by, 10, 11; in the *Essex-Phœbe* fight, 28; is appointed to command the *Epervier*, 1815, 343; attacks and overpowers the Malays at Quallah Battoo, 373, 374

Downes, Commander John, iv. 480.

Downie, Captain George, iii. 144, 145; at the battle of Lake Champlain, 153, 154; killed, 165.

Drayton, Captain Percival, at Port

Royal, iv. 163 ; Captain of the *Hartford*, 386 ; of the *Passaic*, 480.
Drayton, General Thomas F., at Port Royal, iv. 170.
Druid, British brig, attacked by the *Raleigh*, i. 131, 132.
Drummond, British gun-boat, iii. 143.
Drummond, British schooner, captured by Chauncey at Lake George, ii. 353.
Drunkenness and debauchery promoted by gun-boats, ii. 394.
D. Trowbridge, Federal merchantship, captured by the *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Dublin, British frigate, cruises off Callas, iii. 389.
Duc de Lauzan, American frigate, i. 287, 299.
Duckworth, Admiral Sir John T., on the cartel of the *Alert*, ii. 47.
Duddingstone, Lieutenant William, i. 4 ; shot, 10.
Duelling in the American Navy, iii. 305–323; at Gibraltar, 313, 314.
Duke of Gloucester, British ship captured by Americans at Toronto, burned at the attack on Fort George, ii. 346.
Dummy monitor sent adrift by Porter's men, iv. 357.
Dunmore, Lord, in Chesapeake Bay, i. 35.
Dunovant, Colonel R. M., at Fort Beauregard, iv. 170.
Dupont, Commander Samuel Francis, spikes the guns of San Blas, iii. 402 ; takes command of a fleet to take possession of Port Royal, iv. 163.
Dynamite cruisers, construction of, iv. 542.
Eads, James B., ship-builder, takes a contract to build seven iron-clad gun-boats, iv. 242–244; construction of, described, 245, 246 ; Eads and Ericsson, 244.
Eagle, American sloop, in Macdonough's squadron, ii. 354 ; sunk by the British in the Sorel River, 355.
Eagle, American sloop, iii. 136, 138.
Earle, Commodore, attempts to capture the *Oneida* and destroy Sackett's Harbor, ii. 266, 268.
Eastport, Confederate river steamer, captured by Lieutenant Phelps, iv. 267.
Eastport, Federal gun-boat, iv. 369.
Eben Dodge, Federal merchantship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Eclipse, American merchant-ship, attacked and looted by Malays, iii. 374–376.
Edinburgh Review on the treatment of America by Great Britain, i. 384.
Edwin, American merchant-brig, captured by the Dey of Algiers, iii. 341, 351.
Effingham, American frigate, sunk, i. 188.
Eliza, merchant-schooner, David Porter's first ship, ii. 33.
Elizabeth, British schooner, captured by Porter, iii. 4.
Ellet, Colonel Charles, Jr., converts seven river steamers into rams on the Ohio River, iv. 298; his part in the attack on Fort Pillow, 301.
Ellet, Colonel Charles R., sent by Porter to control the Mississippi between Vicksburg and Port Hudson, iv. 351.
Elliott, Lieutenant Jesse D., sent to Buffalo to purchase vessels, ii. 273 ; capture of the *Detroit*, 276, 278, 279; in command of the *Niagara*, 292 ; brings up the gun-boats, 322 ; criticized for inactivity, 335, 336 ; acts as second to Commodore Barron in his duel with Decatur, iii. 319; commands the *Ontario* in an expedition against the Dey of Algiers in 1815, 343.
Elliptical route plan condemned by Admiral Porter, iv. 101.
Emily St. Pierre, British merchant-ship, seized by United

States cruiser *James Adger*, iv. 58 ; recaptured by her captain, *ib.*
Enchantress, merchant-schooner, captured by Confederate privateer *Jefferson Davis*, iv. 91.
Endymion, British frigate, attacks the *Prince de Neufchâtel*, American privateer, iii. 202 ; is defeated, 203 ; assists in the capture of the *President*, 222.
England, greed of, in dealings with her colonies, i. 4 ; tries to crush the new republic, 314.
English Navy of 1812 in American waters, ii. 25.
English officers offended by names given to Yankee ships, iii. 313.
English seaman in 1812, ii. 25.
Ensign, naval, first American, i. 46.
Enterprise, American brig, sent to South America to put down piracy, iii. 331.
Enterprise, American schooner, captures the French privateer *Seine*, i. 330 ; sent to Tripoli in charge of Lieutenant Andrew Sterrett, 335 ; battle with the war polacre *Tripoli*, 335 ; the luckiest naval ship of the War of 1812, ii. 372 ; captures eight privateers, 373 ; cruises in the Mediterranean, *ib.* ; captures the *Tripoli* and the ketch *Mastico*, *ib.* ; changed to a brig and overloaded with guns, 374 ; drives off English privateers under command of Master-commandant Johnston Blakely, 375 ; Lieutenant William Burrows takes charge of her, *ib.*; cruises for privateers, *ib.*; encounters the *Boxer*, *ib.*; her commander wounded, and Lieutenant McCall takes his place, 377, 378 ; the *Boxer* surrenders, 379 ; after the battle Master-commandant James Renshaw appointed to command, 386 ; cruises off the southern coast, *ib.*; escapes from a British frigate, *ib.*; employed as harbor guard, 387.
Enterprise, American sloop, i. 89.
Epervier, British brig-sloop, captured by the *Peacock*, iii. 66–71; taken into Savannah by Lieutenant John B. Nicholson, 76–78.
Epervier, American ship, lost at sea, iii. 354.
Era, Confederate steamer, captured by Federal fleet, iv. 352.
Erben, Captain Henry, at Fort Pillow, iv. 289.
Ericsson, a name given to the first monitor, iv. 215.
Ericsson, John, Swedish engineer, his screw propeller, iv. 10 ; his boat the *Francis B. Ogden*, *ib.* ; induced to come to America, 11 ; plans the first screw steamship, 12; Naval Board makes a contract with, for the *Monitor*, 191.
Erie, Pa., chosen as base of operations for gaining control of Lake Erie, ii. 282 ; ship-building at, 286.
Espiègle, British war-brig, chased by Captain Lawrence of the *Hornet*, ii. 181 ; again chased after sinking the *Peacock*, 190.
Essex, American frigate, sent to Tripoli, i. 335.
Essex, American frigate, ii. 33 ; first cruise in War of 1812, 34–50 ; British frigate *Minerva* refuses to fight with, 39–41 ; captures the *Alert*, 41–43 ; crew of *Alert* plan a rescue, 44 ; chased by the *Shannon*, 47 ; Farragut's account of the crew, 49 ; begins her second cruise, Oct. 8, 1812, iii. 1 ; cruises off Port Praya, 2 ; captures the brig *Nocton*, 2, 3 ; dysentery among the crew, 4 ; panic on board, 6 ; painted and disguised, 8 ; captures British whalers, *ib.* ; refitted from the captured ships, 9 ; captures the *Atlantic* and the *Greenwich*, *ib.*; captures the *Charlton*, 13 ; goes into the harbor of Nukahiva to refit, 18–21 ; an incipient mutiny on, 21 ; attacked by the

Phœbe and *Cherub*, 24–43; losses of, 44; sent to England to be added to the British Navy, 48; her captures, 52; amount of damage done to the enemy, *ib.*
Essex, Federal armor-plated gunboat, iv. 249; in the battle of Port Henry, *ib.*; disabled, 262; Flag Officer Foote's warning to his crews about wasting shot, 261; Commander Robert Townsend, 369.
Essex, Junior, formerly the British whaler *Atlantic*, iii. 12; in the fight between the *Phœbe* and *Cherub* against the *Essex*, 33–43; is disarmed and sent to New York, 49.
Estido, Algerian brig, captured near Cape Palos by the American Navy, iii. 348.
Eurydice, British frigate, ii. 16.
Evans, Surgeon Amos E., ii. 168.
Experiment, British frigate, captures the *Raleigh*, i. 194.
Experiment, American schooner, i. 330.
Exploring expeditions of the American Navy, iii. 464.
"Export powder," an inferior quality of gunpowder, ii. 368.
Fair American, British brig, driven ashore by the *Hyder Ali*, i. 215.
Fairfax, Lieutenant D. M., takes Mason and Slidell off the *Trent*, iv. 144–146.
Fairfax, Commander D. M., iv. 480.
Falcon, Captain Thomas Gordon, chased by the *Constitution*, iii. 247; surrenders, 252.
Falmouth (now called Portland), Maine, attacked by British, i. 24–26, 32.
Fame, privateer of Salem, ii. 241.
Fanny, successful blockade-runner, iv. 63.
Farragut, Commodore David Glasgow, midshipman on the *Essex*, ii. 40; his wit saves a rescue of the *Alert* by her crew, 44; his account of the crew of the *Essex*, 49; as captain when only twelve years old, iii. 12, 13; resumes his studies at Nukahiva, 19–21; his account of the fight of the *Essex* with the *Phœbe* and *Cherub*, 40–42; in his home at Norfolk, Va., 1862, awaiting orders, iv. 311; a member of the Naval Retiring Board, 313; suggested by Porter as a suitable commander of the New Orleans expedition, 313; accepts the position, 314; ships in his squadron, 314, 315; disguises his ships, 317; advances past the barriers, 324–330; demands surrender of New Orleans from Mayor Monroe, 338; pressed by the Administration to open up the Mississippi, 341; his bold cruise practically fruitless, 342; his fortune in the Gulf of Mexico, 357; runs his squadron past the works of Port Hudson, *ib.*; captures Galveston and Corpus Christi, *ib.*; losses in his fleet, 358, watches Confederates strengthen their works at Mobile, 384; moves his fleet up to Fort Morgan, 389; commences the battle, 392; disregards the torpedoes, 396; lashed to the mast, *ib.*; wins the battle when the *Tennessee* surrenders, 403; in his report gives special praise to members of his fleet, *ib.*; his place in history, 465.
Faunce, Captain John, iv. 99.
Federal Government, its great aim to strangle and starve the Confederates, iv. 239.
Fernando de Noronha, Brazil, Porter visits and communicates with Bainbridge at, iii. 3; Captain Semmes allowed to make his headquarters there, iv. 527.
Ferryboats as successful naval ships, iv. 37.
Finch, British gun-boat, iii. 143; disabled in the battle of Lake Champlain, 161.
Fingal, Scotch iron steamer,

erected into a Confederate ironclad, iv. 486 ; renamed the *Atlanta*, 488.
Fitch, Colonel, attacks Charles City, Ark., iv. 307; storms and captures it, 308.
Flag. See *American Flag*.
Flag, armed merchantman, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Flambeau, French privateer, captured by the *Enterprise*, ii. 373.
Flamborough Head, naval fight between the *Serapis* and *Bonhomme Richard* near, i: 243.
Flannen Islands, the *Alliance*, of Paul Jones's fleet, captures a valuable prize off the coast of, i. 236.
Flores, General José Maria, paroled by Commodore Stockton, iii. 397 ; breaks his parole, *ib.*
Florida, Confederate cruiser built at Liverpool, iv. 416 ; her first voyages, 417 ; Captain John Newland Maffitt appointed to command of, 418 ; is fired at by Captain Preble of the *Winona*, 419; escapes, *ib.*; blockaded by the *Cuyler*, 420 ; runs the blockade, 423 ; Captain Charles M. Morris appointed to command of, 424; rammed by the *Wachusett* and taken to the United States, *ib.*; scuttled at Newport News, 429.
Fly, schooner of first American Navy, i. 40.
Foote, Admiral Andrew Hull, Lieutenant on the American brig *Perry*, sent to Africa to assist in putting down the slave traffic, iii. 363 ; his sincere desire to stop the traffic, 364; captures the slave-ships *Martha* and *Chatsworth*, 364–366; the "original prohibitionist of the navy," 367 ; is sent to Canton to protect American interests, 380; is fired on by the Chinese forts, *ib.* ; bombards and captures the forts, 380, 381 ; relieves Commander John Rodgers of his command on the Mississippi, iv. 250 ; assembles a fleet at Paducah, 255 ; inspects the crews, 256 ; seeming insolence of Captain Walke to, 266 ; joins the expedition to Fort Donelson, 268 ; is seriously wounded, 271 ; again, 272 ; is relieved by Captain Charles H. Davis, 289.
Forest Queen, Federal army transport, in Porter's fleet before Vicksburg, iv. 364.
Fort Beauregard, on Bay Point, Charleston, S. C., Confederate fort at Port Royal, iv. 169, 467.
Fort Donelson, strength of, iv. 268 ; arrival of the *Carondelet*, *ib.*; the *St. Louis*, *Louisville*, and *Pittsburg* arrive before, 271; all three ships disabled, *ib.* ; the fleet at a disadvantage, 272 ; surrendered to General Grant, *ib.*
Fort Erie, the Coney Island of Buffalo, ii. 273.
Fort Fisher, N. C., capture of, iv. 503–518 ; fortifications of, 505 ; General Butler's plan of capture, 508–514 ; garrison of, 514.
Fort Gaines shelled by Federal gun-boat *Chickasaw*, iv. 405.
Fort George attacked by the Americans under Winfield Scott, ii. 342–344 ; Scott hauls down the British flag, 344.
Fort Gregg, Charleston, S. C., iv. 467.
Fort Henry, Tennessee River, Foote assembles a fleet at Paducah to attack, iv. 255 ; troops under Grant proceed up the river, *ib.* ; storm clears the river of torpedoes, 256 ; attacked by Foote's fleet, 261–266 ; a victory for the gun-boats, 266 ; its importance to both armies, *ib.*
Fort Hindman, Federal gun-boat, iv. 370.
Fort Jackson, Confederate fortification on the Mississippi, iv. 318 ; bombardment of, 322–324 ; surrendered to Porter, 339.
Fort Johnson, Charleston, S. C., iv. 467.

Fort Morgan, iv. 385, 386, 389.
Fort Moultrie, Charleston, S. C., iv. 467.
Port Pillow, Federal fleet advances to, iv. 289; evacuated by Confederates, 298.
Fort Pinckney, Charleston, S. C., iv. 467.
Fort Ripley, Charleston, S. C., iv. 467.
Fort Sumter, five monitors open fire on, iv. 491; bombarded and reduced to a wreck, 493.
Fort Wagner, Charleston, S. C., iv. 467, 469, 490.
Fort Walker, on Hilton Head, Confederate fort at Port Royal, iv. 169.
Fortress Monroe, the *Monitor* retires to, after the fight with the *Merrimac*, iv. 226.
Forward, American schooner, in attack on Alvarado, iii. 410.
Forward, filibuster craft, cut out by Lieutenant Brownson of the United States frigate *Mohican*, iv. 553.
Foster, Lieutenant-commander J. P., iv. 369.
Foster, General John G., Captain Flusser appeals to him to go and burn the Confederate ironclad *Albemarle*, iv. 454.
Fox, Augustus V., appointed assistant to Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, iv. 35.
Fox, Captain W. H. Cocke, iii. 333.
Foxardo affair, the unfortunate, iii. 337, 338.
France, United States Government abrogates all treaties with, July 7, 1798, i. 314.
Francis B. Ogden, Ericsson's model boat, attains speed of ten miles an hour, iv. 10; Captain Stockton makes a trip on, *ib.*
Franklin sails for France on the *Reprisal*, i. 114.
Franklin, Sir John, American expedition sent to search for the remains of, iii. 464.
Franklin, American schooner, captures ten vessels and Govnor Wright of St. John's, i. 203; captures a quantity of war supplies, *ib.*
Freeborn, Federal steamer, at Acquia Creek, iv. 81.
"Free trade" before "sailors' rights," the motto of Washington politicians in 1812, ii. 18.
Freely, Confederate privateer, iv. 93.
Frémont, John C. ("the Pathfinder"), takes possession of San Diego, iii. 394; commands in the Mississippi Valley, iv. 241.
French cruisers destroy American shipping, i. 314.
French troops enter Mexico, iv. 367.
Friendship, American ship, attacked and looted by natives of Sumatra, iii. 368.
Frolic, American sloop, built at Portsmouth, N. H., in 1814, iii. 64; Master-commandant Joseph Bainbridge appointed to, 65; sinks a Carthagenian privateer, *ib.*; encounters the British frigate *Orpheus* and schooner *Shelburne*, *ib.*, surrenders, 66.
Frolic, British brig, encountered by the *Wasp*, ii. 106; captured by the *Wasp*, 107–112; comparison between the ships, 116; recaptured by the *Poictiers*, 118.
Frontier posts retained by England contrary to treaty, i. 383; posts used as Indian headquarters, *ib.*
Fry, Captain Joseph, capture of, iv. 308; captured and executed by the Spaniards in the *Virginius* expedition, *ib.*
Fulton ferryboat *Somerset* captures the blockade-runner *Circassian* off Havana, iv. 37.
Fulton, naval plans of, iv. 3, 4; his first steam war-ship, the *Demologos*, 4; report of commissioners appointed to examine her, 7, 8; blown to pieces, 9.

Fulton 2d, launched in 1887, iv. 11.
Gadsden, Christopher, member of first Marine Committee, i. 36.
Gaines, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 380.
Galatea, British frigate, chased by the *Congress* and *President*, ii. 151.
Galena, Federal gun-boat, iv. 389.
Gallinipper, American barge, captures a pirate schooner, iii. 335.
Galveston, Texas, blockaded by the *South Carolina*, iv. 44; bombarded by Captain James Alden of the Federal frigate *South Carolina*, 121; the foreign consuls protest against the bombardment, 123; captured by Farragut, 357; is retaken by the Confederates, *ib.*
Gamble, Lieutenant Peter, killed in the battle of Lake Champlain, iii. 157.
Gaspé, captured by men armed with paving-stones, i. 9.
Gazelle, Federal gun-boat, iv. 370.
Geisinger, Midshipman David, placed in charge of the captured ship *Atlanta*, iii. 100.
General Armstrong, American privateer schooner, iii. 186; owned by New York men, *ib.*; under Captain Tim Barnard captures nineteen prizes, 187; sails from New York under command of Captain Samuel C. Reid, *ib.*; arrives at Fayal and encounters the *Carnation*, *Plantagenet*, and *Rota*, *ib.*; is attacked by boats from the three ships, but beats them off, 189; scuttled and abandoned by her crew, 200.
General Bragg, Confederate gun-boat, rams the *Cincinnati* at Fort Pillow, iv. 293; raked by the *Carondelet*, 294; surrenders, 302.
General Monk, British ship, attacked and captured by the *Hyder Ali*, i. 209–215.
General Pike, American ship, burned at the attack on Fort George, ii. 346.
General Price, Federal ram, in Porter's fleet before Vicksburg, iv. 364.
General Rusk, Confederate steamer, blockaded in Galveston by the Federal frigate *Santee*, iv. 137.
Georgiana, British whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 8.
Gerdes, F. H., Federal coast surveyor at New Orleans, iv. 322.
German troops hired by England to fight in America, i. 32.
Ghent, terms and conditions of the treaty of, iii. 209.
Gherardi, Commander Bancroft, iv. 389.
Gibraltar, formerly the *Sumter*. See *Sumter*.
Gibraltar, duels between American and English officers at, iii. 311–313.
Gillis, Captain John P., iv. 99; of the *Seminole* at Port Royal, 163.
Glasgow, British sloop-of-war, fight with Commodore Hopkins's American squadron, i. 59.
Globe, American privateer, ii. 250.
"God Save the King," American sailors on British ships compelled to bare their heads when played, i. 394, iii. 291.
Godon, Captain S. W., at Port Royal, iv. 163.
Golden Rocket, captured by the *Sumter*, iv. 410.
Goldsborough, Flag Officer L. M., in charge of expedition sent against Roanoke Island, iv. 109; in charge of a large fleet sent to ram the *Merrimac*, 235.
Gordon's Landing, Red River, fort at, attacked by Ellet, iv. 352.
Gorringe, Master H. H., iv. 370.
Governor, Federal transport, sinks off Cape Hatteras, iv. 166.
Governor Tompkins, American privateer, ii. 253.
Governor Tryon, British sloop,

attacked by and strikes to the American privateer *Thorn*, i. 209.
Grampus, American schooner, in fleet sent to punish pirates in South America, iii. 331 ; captures the *Pandrita*, 332.
Grand Gulf, Porter attacks fortifications of, and finds them evacuated, iv. 367 ; Grant makes it his base of supplies, *ib.*
Grant, General Ulysses Simpson, attempts to dislodge Confederates below Cairo, iv. 251 ; attacks the Confederates at Belmont, 251, 252 ; proceeds up the Tennessee, to attack Fort Henry, 255 ; muddy roads prevents his taking part in the capture of the fort, 266 ; at Fort Donelson, 268 ; Captain Walker diverts the Confederates' attention from him, 271 ; Confederates surrender to him, 272 ; fight with Confederates at Pittsburg Landing, 284 ; arrives before Vicksburg, 351 ; goes to New Carthage to surround Vicksburg, 363 ; makes Grand Gulf his base of supplies, 367.
Granville, French privateer, in the fleet of Paul Jones, i. 234.
Graves, Admiral, destroys Portland, Maine, i. 24–26.
Grease as a protection on armor-plated ships, iv. 10.
Great Britain, sea-power of, in 1812, ii. 22 ; European nations dread the power of, 23.
Greene, Lieutenant Charles H., iv. 386.
Greene, Captain P. B., blockaded in Bahia Harbor, ii. 179 ; refuses Lawrence's challenge, *ib.* ; cowardice of, 180 ; rescued by the *Montagu*, *ib.*
Greene, Lieutenant S. D., executive officer of the *Monitor*, iv. 216 ; takes charge of the guns in the turret, 219, 220 ; takes command after Worden is disabled, 226 ; his statement, 229, 230 ; orders regarding the *Merrimac*, 235.
Greenpoint, Brooklyn, N. Y., the *Monitor* constructed at, iv. 192.
Greenwich, British letter-of-marque whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 9.
Greer, Lieutenant - commander James A., before Vicksburg, iv. 363, 369.
Greyhound, Captain John Porter, iii. 333.
Growler, American schooner, captured by the British, ii. 351 ; recaptured by the Americans, 351.
Growler, American sloop, in Macdonough's squadron, ii. 354 ; grounded in the Sorel River, 355.
Growler, American sloop, iii. 135, 138.
Guanabara, Brazilian rebel warship at Rio Janeiro, iv. 548 ; fired on by the United States cruiser *Detroit*, 553.
Guerrière, American frigate, built in 1814, iii. 64 ; Decatur's flagship in expedition sent against the Dey of Algiers, 346, 347.
Guerrière, British frigate, picking sailors from American ships, ii. 6 ; flees from an inferior force, 7 ; stops the *Spitfire*, and takes off John Deguyo, an American citizen, *ib.* ; race with the *Constitution*, 55 ; Captain Dacres in charge of, 55–60 ; fight with the *Constitution*, 76–95 ; surrendered and blown up, 95.
Gun-boats, the ideal navy, ii. 388 ; description and build of, 389 ; arguments in favor of, 390 ; cheapness of, 392 ; points against, *ib.* ; cost of, 393 ; difficulty of getting unanimity of captains in battle, 394 ; lack of discipline on gun-boats, *ib.* ; use of, in Long Island Sound, 395 ; first encounter with gun-boats, *ib.* ; uselessness again shown, 416.
Gunners of 1812 and 1861 compared, iv. 419.

Gunpowder, expedients for getting, by the United Colonies, i. 28.
Guns, penetrating power of long and short, iii. 142; improvements made in, iv. 18–23.
Gwin, Lieutenant, supports Grant at Pittsburg Landing, iv. 284.
Hacker, Captain Hoysted, i. 79, 282, 283.
Haggerty, Captain F. L., at Port Royal, iv. 163.
Halifax, British war-ship, i. 406, 407.
Hallock, Captain William, i. 66.
Hambleton, Purser on the *Lawrence* in the battle of Lake Erie, ii. 317.
Hamilton, American schooner, ii. 350.
Hamilton, Schuyler, suggests cutting through the trees of swamp from the Mississippi to New Madrid, iv. 281.
Hampton Roads, the first point blockaded in the Civil War, iv. 40; *Keystone State* blockades, 45.
Hanchett, Captain, ii. 398.
Handy, Captain Robert, misunderstands signals, iv. 133, 134; letter to Captain Pope, showing his fear of the *Manassas*, 136.
Hannah, a Providence packet, chased by the *Gaspé*, i. 5.
Harding, Captain Seth, surrenders to the *Orpheus* and *Roebuck*, i. 298.
Harriet Lane, American revenue cutter, used as a war-ship, iv. 42; Captain John Faunce, 99.
Harriet Lane, Federal frigate, captured in the Gulf of Mexico, iv. 357.
Harrison, Lieutenant Napoleon B., iv. 314.
Hartford, United States screw sloop, built, iv. 16; flagship of Captain Farragut, 314; set on fire by Confederate fire-raft, 329; passes the batteries at Port Hudson, 358; flagship of Rear-admiral Farragut, 386.
Hatteras, Cape, battle between the *Wasp* and the *Frolic* in the tail of a gale off, ii. 107.
Hatteras, Fort, captured by Federal forces, iv. 106; the first Union victory in the War of Secession, *ib.*
Hatteras hurricane, a fleet of transports in a, iv. 166.
Hatteras Inlet, N. C., resort of the "Hatteras Pirates," iv. 97.
Hatteras, merchant-steamer, captured and sunk by the *Alabama* at Galveston, iv. 432.
Hawke, American tender, captured by British off Long Island, i. 56.
Hawkins, Captain Richard, refuses to fight the *Essex*, ii. 39–41; branded as a coward, 40.
Haymakers, Machias, attack of the, on the *Margaretta*, i. 21.
Haymakers and wood-choppers as Yankee seamen, iii. 82, 83, 86, 90, 95.
Hazard, American privateer, captured the British brig *Active*, i. 206.
Hazard, Captain, in the first naval battle of the Revolution, i. 57.
Hebrus, British frigate, ii. 420.
Hector, British letter-of-marque ship, captured by Lieutenant Downes, iii. 10.
Heddart, Captain Francis, extracts from his account of the *Serapis-Bonhomme Richard* battle, i. 245, 257.
Henley, Midshipman John D., assists in the attack on the city of Tripoli, i. 366.
Henry Clay, Federal army transport, in Porter's fleet before Vicksburg, iv. 364; catches fire and sinks, *ib.*
Hewes, Joseph, member of first Marine Committee, i. 36.
Hibernia British transport, captured by Captain Hopkins, i. 281.
Hickman, on the Mississippi, evacuated by the Confederates, iv. 275.

Highflyer, British schooner, Captain Rodgers succeeds in getting private signals from, ii. 23, 358.
Hillyar, Captain James, in the harbor of Valparaiso, iii. 25; attempts to attack the *Essex*, but is scared off, 26; attacks the *Essex* in company with the *Cherub*, 30–43; criticism on handling his ship, 46.
Hilton Head. See *Fort Walker*.
Hinman, Captain Elisha, i. 66; sent to France for army supplies, 130; his ship captured by the British, 133.
Hislop, Lieutenant-general, Governor of Bombay, on board the *Java* in her fight with the *Constitution*, ii. 168; Captain Bainbridge's curious dream of, 172, 173.
Hoel, Lieutenant W. R., iv. 363, 370.
Hoffman, Lieutenant B. V., sent to take charge of the *Cyane* when she surrendered, iii. 252.
Hoke, General, advances on Plymouth, N. C., and captures it, iv. 455, 456.
Holdup, Thomas, in the battle of Lake Erie, chases and captures the *Chippewa* and *Little Belt*, ii. 326.
Holland, torpedo boat, launching of, iv. 543.
Holland, John P., inventor of submarine torpedo boats, iv. 542.
Honor, American Medal of, origin of, iv. 111.
Hope, Lieutenant David, horrible cruelty of, to sailors, i. 389; wounded on the *Macedonian*, ii. 140; his report on gunnery practice, 143.
Hopkins, Esek, Commander-in-chief of first American fleet, i. 42; career of, 48; dismissed from the service, 61; dies near Providence, R. I., *ib.*
Hopkins, Captain John Burrows, in command of the *Cabot*, i. 57.
Hopkins, Commodore Robert, receives his appointment through influence of John Adams, i. 49; sent to Chesapeake Bay in search of Lord Dunmore, 53; goes to the Bahamas instead and attacks the British there, *ib.*
Hopkins, Stephen, member of first Marine Committee, i. 36.
Hornet, sloop of first American Navy, i. 40.
Hornet, American sloop-of-war, blockades the British war-ship *Bonne Citoyenne* in Bahia Harbor, ii. 179; raises the blockade on the approach of the *Montagu*, 180; captures the *Resolution*, 181; falls in with the *Peacock*, *ib.*; fight with the *Peacock*, 182–184; encounters the *Penguin*, iii. 273; the *Penguin* surrenders, 274–280; the *Hornet* chased by the *Cornwallis*, but escapes, 282–284; Captain Robert Henley appointed to command, 330; detailed to South America to destroy pirates, 331.
Horses, wild, as weapons of offence, iii. 401.
Housatonic, Federal war-ship, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Howard, Lieutenant Samuel, iv. 370.
Howe, Captain Tyringham, i. 59.
Huger, Captain Thomas B., at New Orleans, iv. 321; mortally wounded, 332.
Hull, Lieutenant Isaac, cuts the privateer *Sandwich* out of Puerto Plata, i. 329; tricky conduct of the officers of two British frigates to, ii. 15; the frigates turn and retreat, 16; his opinion of the crew of the *Constitution*, 52; his escape from a British squadron, after standing at his post for two days, 53–69; race with the *Guerrière*, 55; fight with and capture of the *Guerrière*, 76–95; reception on returning to Boston, 101; Congress votes a gold medal to, 103.
Humphreys, Joshua, American

ship-builder, statement of, in regard to new ships, i. 311 ; his theories accepted, 312.
Hunt, William H., Secretary of the Navy, appoints a board of naval officers, with Rear-admiral Rodgers at its head, iv. 527.
Hunter, American ship, captured by the *Peacock*, ii. 191 ; taken in charge by the *Hornet*, *ib.*
Hunter, British ship, attacked by privateers, i. 200.
Hunter, British brig, in battle of Lake Erie, ii. 296.
Hussar, Austrian war-ship, Martin Koszta, an American citizen taken and detained on, iii. 385 ; on demand of Captain Ingraham of the *St. Louis* is given up, *ib.*
Hutter, Midshipman, killed while assisting the Union wounded out of the *Congress*, iv. 209.
Hyder Ali, American privateer, Captain Joshua Barney, attacks and captures the *General Monk*, i. 212–215.
Illinois, United States battle-ship, iv. 534, 536.
Impressment, feeling of American seamen regarding the practice of, ii. 18.
Independence, American privateer, Commander Thomas Truxton, cuts out three big ships from the British fleet, i. 205.
Indian Chief, Confederate ship, iv. 499.
Indiana, United States battle-ship, iv. 534.
Indianola, Federal armored gun-boat, in attack on Port Hudson, iv. 352 ; captured and sunk by the Confederates, *ib.*
Indians, friendship of, cultivated by England to injure United States, i. 383; incited by British to attack pioneers, *ib.*
Ingraham, Captain Duncan Nathaniel, demands the surrender of Martin Koszta, an American citizen detained on the Austrian war-ship *Hussar*, iii. 385; medal presented to him by Congress, 386.
Inland navy an imperative necessity to reach the heart of the Confederacy, iv. 241.
Inman, Lieutenant William, chases and captures a pirate schooner, iii. 335.
Insurgent, French frigate, Captain Barreaut, captures the American ship *Retaliation*, i. 316 ; battle with the *Constellation*, 320–322 ; surrenders, 321 ; lost at sea, 330.
International law, a question of violation of, iv. 160.
Intrepid, formerly the *Mastico*, used as a fire-ship at the attack on Tripoli, i. 371 ; explodes, 378.
Investigator, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Iowa, United States battle-ship, iv. 534, 536.
Ironclad warfare, superior activity of the Confederates in preparing for, iv. 184.
Ironclads, the Confederate Government the first to construct, iv. 185; the *Merrimac* launched, 188; Congress makes appropriation for construction of, 190 ; dilatory action of Naval Board in making contracts for, 191 ; first battle between, 220.
Iroquois, United States screw sloop, built, iv. 16.
Iroquois, Federal screw corvette, iv. 314.
Irving, Washington, on Perry's victory on Lake Erie, ii. 338.
Isaac Smith, Federal war-ship, in the Port Royal fleet, iv. 164.
Island No. 10, strongly fortified by the Confederates, iv. 275 ; Foote's flotilla arrives in front of, 276; capture of, delayed two weeks by Foote, 281 ; Captain Walke successfully runs the gauntlet of batteries on, 282, 283 ; the island captured, 283,

289; has disappeared under action of the current, 284.
Isle-aux-Noix, British fort at, iii. 136, 139.
Isle St. Mary, Paul Jones lands on and surrounds the house of the Earl of Selkirk, i. 147, 148.
Itasca, Federal screw gun-boat, iv. 314; breaks down barriers placed across the Mississippi, 323; Lieutenant-commander George Brown, 389.
Ivy, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 127.
James, Reuben, seaman, saves Decatur's life, i. 364.
James Adger, American cruiser, captures the *Emily St. Pierre*, iv. 58; the latter recaptured, *ib.*
Jamestown, Confederate warship, captures several prizes in sight of the *Monitor*, iv. 235.
Japan, condition of, in the sixteenth century, iii. 438; experience with Christianity, *ib.*; Dutch trading at Nagaski, *ib.*; introduction of Western civilization by the American fleet, 439; Commodore M. C. Perry's work in opening the ports of Japan, *ib.*; appointed to the Japan mission, 443; Commodore Perry's exhibition of power and dignity wins the respect of, 444.
Jason, British transport, captured by Captain Hopkins, i. 281.
Java, British frigate, fight with the *Constitution* off the coast of Brazil, 155–173; poor gunnery of, 157; a complete wreck in sixty-five minutes, 162; losses of, 169.
Jefferson, American brig, iii. 113.
Jefferson Davis, Confederate privateer, captures the *John Welsh*, *Enchantress*, *S. J. Waring*, iv. 91; *Mary Goodell* and *Mary E. Thompson*, 92; runs aground at St. Augustine and is lost, 93.
Jenkins, Captain Thornton A., iv. 386.
Jersey, the notorious prison-ship, sketch of, i. 221–226.
John Adams, Perry's flagship on his cruise to South America, iii. 327.
John Welsh, merchant-brig, captured by Confederate privateer *Jefferson Davis*, iv. 91.
Johnson, Captain Henry, in charge of brig *Lexington*, sent to Europe, i. 117.
Johnson, Captain J. D., succeeds Admiral Buchanan on the *Tennessee*, iv. 402; surrenders his ship to Captain Le Roy, of the Federal steamer *Ossipee*, 403.
Jones, Captain Jacob, encounters the *Frolic* in a gale, ii. 106; captures the *Frolic*, 107–117; surrenders the *Wasp* and the *Frolic* to the frigate *Poictiers*, 118, 119; rewarded with a gold medal from Congress, 119; given command of the frigate *Macedonian*, 119, 143.
Jones, American brig, iii. 113.
Jones, John Paul, first independent command of, i. 64; promoted to rank of captain, 73; fight with the *Solebay*, 73–76; outsails the British frigate *Milford*, 77; sails into Canso Harbor, *ib.*; in Newport Harbor, 78; in command of flagship *Alfred*, 79; passes through British squadron off Block Island, *ib.*; captures brig *Mellish*, *ib.*; encounters and captures coal fleet in Canso Harbor, 80; captures a British privateer, *ib.*; chased by the *Milford*, *ib.*; arrives in Boston, 82; ordered back to the brig *Providence*, 83; bad treatment of, by Congress, *ib.*; appointed to the gun-ship *Ranger*, 134; sails to Nantes, 135; reaches Quiberon Bay, 137; sails from Brest to England, 138; scuttles a merchant-brig, *ib.*; seizes the *Lord Chatham*, *ib.*; sails to Whitehaven, *ib.*; attempts to capture the *Drake*, 140; descends on

Whitehaven, 141 ; his crew takes an earl's silver, 142 ; attacks the house of the Earl of Selkirk, 147 ; returns the silver taken by his crew, 151, 152 ; second and successful attempt to capture the *Drake*, 152; generosity of, 155 ; fought for honor, 158 ; inactivity of, in France, 228 ; fits out the *Bonhomme Richard*, 229 ; Congress arranges to give him a fleet, 232 ; the *Alliance*, *Pallas*, and *Vengeance* put under his command, 232 ; trouble with Captain Landais of the *Alliance*, 234 ; his fleet sails from L'Orient augmented by the *Monsieur* and *Granville*, *ib.* ; captures a brigantine, 235 ; Landais refuses to attend a council of officers, 237 ; proposes to attack Leith, *ib.* ; delay and a windstorm prevent his landing, 240; meets a fleet of merchantmen off Flamborough Head, 243 ; the *Serapis* bears down to meet him, *ib.*; attacks the *Serapis*, 245 ; fight with the *Serapis*, 247–259 ; character of, 265 ; his account of events after the surrender, 269–272 ; arrives at Texel, followed by a British squadron, 273 ; flight of, 275 ; made a hero of, at Paris, *ib.* ; sails to America in the *Ariel*, 277 ; honors on his arrival, *ib.*; denounced as a pirate by the British Government, *ib.*; misrepresented by English writers, *ib.*; his pride in being an American, 278.

Jones, Lieutenant Thomas ap Catesby, with a small flotilla, opposes the British fleet at New Orleans, iii. 232–238 ; he is cut down and his small force eventually surrenders, 236, 237 ; sent in command of a squadron to the Pacific coast, 388 ; strikes the first blow in the Mexican War, 390 ; lands at and takes possession of Monterey, *ib.* ; surrenders the town, *ib.* ; appointed chief officer on the Confederate ironclad *Merrimac*, iv. 188 ; takes command after Captain Buchanan is wounded, 209 ; returns with the *Merrimac* to Sewell's Point, 213.

Joseph, British ship, captured by the *Surprise*, i. 124.

Joseph H. Toone, Federal schooner, iv. 129.

Joseph Maxwell, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.

Joseph Parke, Federal merchantship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.

Jouett, Lieutenant James E., cuts out the *Royal Yacht* from Galveston Harbor, iv. 138, 139; Lieutenant-commander of the *Metacomet*, 386.

Judah, Confederate privateer schooner, destroyed at Fort Pickens, iv. 120.

Julia, American schooner, ii. 268; captured by the British, 351.

Junon, British frigate, becalmed in Hampton Roads, attacked by gun-boats, ii. 395 ; chases the *Constitution* off Cape Ann, iii. 244.

J. W. Hewes, merchant-ship, captured by Confederate privateers, iv. 97.

Katahdin, Federal screw gunboat, iv. 315.

Kearny, Sailing-master Lawrence, attacks a party from the frigate *Hebrus*, ii. 420 ; captures the tender of the frigate *Severn*, 421.

Kearny, Brigadier-general Stephen W., goes to the assistance of Commodore Stockton in Mexico, iii. 398 ; is repulsed and wounded, *ib.*; marches to San Diego, *ib.*

Kearsarge, American sloop-of-war, built, iv. 38.

Kearsarge, Federal armored frigate, meets the *Alabama* in

Cherbourg Harbor, France, iv. 436; comparison of their armament, 437; description of the fight, 438–441; the best gunnery of the Civil War, 441.
Kearsarge (new), United States battle-ship, iv. 534, 536.
Kedge anchor, use of, on the *Essex*, ii. 49.
Kedging, method of, described, ii. 58
Kennebec, Federal screw gunboat, iv. 314; Lieutenant-commander William P. McCann, 389.
Kennon, Captain Beverley, at New Orleans, iv. 321; attacks the *Varuna*, 334; surrenders, 335.
Kentucky, western, railroad communication with the East cut off from, iv. 267.
Keokuk, Federal monitor, at Charleston, iv. 483, 485.
Kerr, Captain Robert, attacks the *Constitution* at Porto Prayo, iii. 260.
Keystone State, armed merchantman, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Kidnapped sailors ill-fed and poorly paid on British ships, i. 387.
Kilty, Captain A. H., before Fort Pillow, iv. 289; aids the *Cincinnati*, 294.
Kines, Federal screw gun-boat, iv. 315, 358.
Kingston, Canada, chief naval and military post in 1812, ii. 265; Commodore Chauncey attacks, 270.
Kirkcaldy, Scotland, anecdote of the parson of, on the approach of Paul Jones's squadron, i. 238.
Koszta, Martin, an American citizen, taken by the Austrian authorities on board the war-ship *Hussar*, iii. 385.
Lackawanna, Federal gun-boat, iv. 389.
Lady Gore, British schooner, captured by Chauncey at Lake George, ii. 353.
Lady Prevost, British war-vessel, fired and destroyed by the Americans, ii. 279.
Lafayette, carried back to France in the *Alliance*, i. 232; narrowly escapes capture, *ib.*
Lafayette, Federal gun-boat, in Porter's fleet surrounding Vicksburg, iv. 363; Lieutenant-commander J. P. Foster, 369.
Lake Erie, the battle of, ii. 309–325.
Lamb, Colonel William, commander of Fort Fisher, iv. 507.
Lambert, Captain Henry, surrenders to Captain Bainbridge of the *Constitution*, ii. 155–173; his attempt to board the *Constitution*, 158; mortally wounded, 165; Captain Bainbridge returns his sword, 172.
Lambert, Jonathan, proprietor of the island of Tristan d'Acunha, a breeding resort for seals in the South Atlantic, iii. 270.
Lancaster, United States screw sloop, built, iv. 16.
Lancaster, Federal ram, sunk below Port Hudson, iv. 358.
Landais, Captain Pierre, placed in command of the *Alliance* by Congress, i. 232; mutinous conduct of, 234; fouls the *Alliance* with the *Bonhomme Richard*, *ib.*; insolence of, 235; captures a valuable prize, 236; refuses to attend a council of officers, 237; jealousy of, 241; further insubordination of, 244; fires into the *Bonhomme Richard*, 254; treachery of, 267; dismissed and settles in New York City, *ib.*
Langdon, John, member of first Marine Committee, i. 36.
Langthorne, Lieutenant A. R., iv. 370.
La Pique, British frigate, encounters the *Constitution* off Porto Rico, iii. 242.
Lardner, Captain J. L., com-

mands the *Susquehanna* at Port Royal, iv. 163.
Laugharne, Captain Thomas L. P., surrenders to Porter, ii. 42.
Laurens, Henry, American Ambassador to Holland, is removed from the *Mercury* by the Captain of the British ship *Vestal*, and taken to St. Johns, Newfoundland, iv. 153; taken to England and imprisoned in the Tower of London, 154; exchanged for Lord Cornwallis, *ib.*; his case parallel to the *Trent* affair, *ib.*
Lurestinus, British frigate, ii. 395.
Law, Lieutenant of British marines, fires at Lawrence and wounds him, ii. 213.
Lawrence, American brig, flagship of Commodore Perry, ii. 290; in the battle of Lake Erie, 317; Perry shifts his flag to the *Niagara*, 321; sunk in Little Bay, 337.
Lawrence, Captain James, Midshipman on the *Constitution*, i. 348; Captain of the *Hornet*, 403; blockades the British warship *Bonne Citoyenne* in Bahia Harbor, ii. 179; challenges Captain Greene, *ib.*; compelled to raise the blockade, 180; recaptures the *William*, 181; captures the *Resolution*, *ib.*; is chased by the *Peacock*, 182; the *Peacock* is beaten, 183; Lawrence fits his ship for another fight, 190; chases the *Espiègle*, *ib.*; put all hands on half rations and squares away for home, 191; promoted to command the *Chesapeake*, 192; sails out of Boston to meet the *Shannon*, 197; has difficulty in getting a crew, 199; is challenged by Captain Broke of the *Shannon*, 203; sails out to meet the enemy, 204; addresses his crew, 205; mutinous spirit of his men, 206; displays great skill in handling his ship, *ib.*; the *Chesapeake* is damaged and begins to drift, 213; Lawrence shot, *ib.*; dies, 221; interred in Trinity Churchyard, 225.
Lay, John L., devises a torpedo boat, iv. 458; used by Lieutenant Cushing to destroy the *Albemarle*, 459–461.
Leander affair, the, i. 403, 404; Captain Whitby court-martialed, 405.
Lear, Tobias, American Consul-general at Algiers 1812, iii. 340.
Lee, American galley, i. 89.
Lee, American schooner, i. 30, 197; assists in capturing a British troop-ship, 203.
Lee, Captain F. D., Chief of Confederate torpedo corps, iv. 497.
Lee, Richard Henry, member of first Marine Committee, i. 36.
Lee, Rear-admiral S. Phillips, iv. 314; in command of the Albemarle Station, 454.
Leopard and *Chesapeake*, affair of the, i. 40.
Le Roy, Commander William E., iv. 389.
Letter of marque and a privateer, difference between, iii. 242.
Levant, British sloop-of-war, chased by the *Constitution*, iii. 247; surrenders, 255.
Lewis, Captain Jacob, made Commodore of the American fleet in New York Harbor, ii. 394.
Lexington, American brig, i. 63; captured by British frigate *Pearl*, 66; escapes, 68; sent to Europe under Captain Johnson, 117; captured by the cutter *Alert*, 119, 120; fate of the crew of, 121, 122.
Lexington, merchant-vessel, purchased by Commander Rodgers for use in Federal Navy, iv. 241; Captain Stembel appointed to command, 251.
Lexington, Federal gun-boat, iv. 369.
Lexington, battle of, i. 14.
Lincoln's proclamation blockading the Southern ports, iv. 28–30.

Linnet, British brig, at the battle of Lake Champlain, iii. 138, 142, 166 ; surrenders, *ib.*
Linzee, Captain, chased by the *Gaspé*, i. 5.
Little, Captain John, fights and captures the *Berceau*, i. 328.
Little Belt, British corvette, fires on the American frigate *President*, ii. 10 ; in battle of Lake Erie, 297.
Little Falls, N. Y., Indian and Dutch traders at, ii. 263.
Little Rebel, sunk by the Federals at Fort Pillow, iv. 302.
Livermore, Parson Samuel, ii. 214.
Livingston, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 127.
Lloyd, Captain Robert, assists in the attack on the *General Armstrong*, iii. 194.
Lockyer, Captain, attacks Lieutenant Catesby Jones at New Orleans, iii. 235.
Lomax, Colonel, captures the Pensacola Navy Yard, iv. 112.
Lord Nelson, British merchantman, captured by the *Oneida*, ii. 265.
Los Angeles, Cal., captured from the Mexicans by Commodore Stockton, iii. 397 ; recaptured, *ib.*; retaken by the Americans, 401.
Lottery, American ship, captured, iii. 204.
Louisa Beaton, American brigantine, engaged in the African slave traffic, iii. 364.
Louisa Hatch, captured by the *Alabama*, iv. 427.
Louisa Kilham, Federal merchantship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Louisiana, American schooner, in the attack on New Orleans, iii. 240 ; used as a powder-boat to blow up Fort Fisher, iv. 510.
Louisville, armor-plated Federal gun-boat, built by Eads, iv. 245 ; disabled, 271 ; in Porter's fleet before Vicksburg, 363, 369.
Lowell, Confederate ship, sunk at Fort Pillow, iv. 301.
Lowry, Captain R. R., iv. 100.
Loyal Convert, British vessel, i. 90.
Ludlow, Lieutenant Augustus C., strives to get the crew in place, ii. 206 ; mortally wounded, 210 ; interred in Trinity Churchyard, 225.
Ludlow, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Lynch, Confederate Commodore W. F., at Roanoke Island, iv. 109.
Lyons, Lord, British Minister to Washington, his instructions relative to the *Trent* affair, iv. 150–153.
McCall, Lieutenant Edward Rutley, in the *Boxer* fight, ii. 376 ; takes command after Captain Burrows is disabled, 378 ; the *Boxer* surrenders to him, 379.
McCann, Lieutenant William P., iv. 389.
McCauley, Commodore, disloyal conduct of, at the Norfolk Navy Yard, iv. 72–74.
McClellan, Federal transport, iv. 135.
McDonald, Lieutenant James, succeeds Captain Dickenson in command, iii. 276 ; surrenders to Captain Biddle, 276–278.
Macdonough, Captain Thomas, i. 348 ; in the attack on the city of Tripoli, 361 ; sends the *Growler* and *Eagle* in pursuit of British gun-boats, iii. 136 ; repairs to Vergennes, Vt., *ib.* ; in command of a squadron, 144, 145 ; his careful preparations, 147–150 ; his squadron assembled, 152 ; an interested audience, *ib.* ; the battle opened with a prayer, 154 ; a sporting rooster, 155 ; Macdonough is knocked senseless, 161 ; he cleverly winds his ship, 164 ; wins the battle of Lake Champlain, 166 ; casualties and losses of, in the battle, 174 ; anecdote

of, 179–181; the Legislature of New York donates him land, 182; the Legislature of Vermont presents him with a farm, *ib.*; he is promoted, 183; his victory served to bring the war to a close, 184.

Macedonian, British frigate, cruelty and flogging of sailors on, i. 389; encounters the frigate *United States*, ii. 124; battle with, 125–134; a horrible scene of carnage, 134; the crew breaks into the spirits-room, 136, 137; American seamen found on board, 137, 138; losses among the crew, 139; the forces of the two ships, 140; taken to New York, 148; fitted for sea in the American service, 150.

Machias, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.

Machias haymakers, attack of the, on the *Margaretta*, i. 21.

McLane, American steamer, grounded before Alvarado, Mexico, iii. 410.

Macomb, Major-general Alexander, opposed to Sir George Prevost at Plattsburg, iii. 147, 169.

McRae, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 17.

McRae, Confederate cotton-clad steamer, iv. 321; fight with the Federal steamer *Iroquois*, 332.

Madame Island, Paul Jones captured British vessels at, i. 78.

Madison, American privateer, ii. 245.

Madison, the flagship of Commodore Chauncey, ii. 341.

Madison, President, lack of an American Navy discreditable to the Administration of, ii. 26.

Maffitt, Captain John Newland, authority on construction of fortifications, iv. 170; appointed to command of Confederate cruiser *Florida*, 418; goes to Havana and Mobile to get a crew, *ib.*; his ship fired at by Captain Preble, of the *Winona*, 419; is blockaded, but escapes, 423; goes to Nassau, *ib.*; cruises between New York and Brazil, 424; overhauls his ship, *ib.*; he is relieved by Captain Morris, *ib.*

Magnet, British brig, iii. 128.

Mahan, Captain A. T., fortifications of Mobile described by, iv. 379–383.

Mahone, William, Southern politician, trickery of, iv. 74, 75.

Maine, United States cruiser, iv. 534.

Maitland, Captain, falls in with the *Constitution*, iii. 243; afraid to engage the *Constitution*, *ib.*

Majestic, British cruiser, iv. 534, 535.

Majestic, British razee, assists in the capture of the *President* off Long Island, iii. 216.

Malayans, teaching, to fear the American flag, iii. 373–379.

Malden, Captain Barclay, his rendezvous before the battle of Lake Erie, ii. 294.

Maley, Lieutenant William, i. 330.

Manassas, Confederate ram, formerly the *Enoch Train*, iv. 127; remodelled and put in charge of Lieutenant Alexander F. Warley, 128; strikes the *Richmond* and causes a panic, 129–131; 321; attacks the *Brooklyn*, 332; sinks, 333.

Manhattan, Federal monitor, iv. 386.

Manly, Captain John, i. 30, 197; surrenders the *Hancock*, 185.

Manners, Captain William, fights the *Wasp*, iii. 85; severely wounded, 87; killed, 88.

Maples, Captain John F., goes in search of the sloop *Argus*, ii. 362; finds her by the light of the flames on a wine ship, 363; captures the sloop, 363–367; sends it by a prize crew to Plymouth, 371.

Marchand, Captain John B., iv. 389.
Margaret and Jessie, successful blockade-runner, iv. 63.
Margaretta, attack on the, by the Machias haymakers, i. 21.
Maria, British transport, captured by Captain Hopkins, i. 281.
Maria, Boston schooner, captured by Algerian pirates, i. 309.
Marine Committee of Congress, i. 158.
Marine Committee of United Colonies appointed, i. 36.
Marquis de la Fayette, French privateer, i. 297.
Mars, American privateer, fitted out by Captain Thomas Truxton, cruises in English Channel, and captures numerous prizes, i. 205.
Mars, English privateer, captured by the *Alliance*, i. 297.
Marston, Captain John, iv. 200.
Martha, American slave-ship, captured by Lieutenant Foote, iii. 364.
Martin, British sloop, grounds on Crow's Shoal, ii. 401.
Mary, British schooner, captured by Chauncey at Lake George, ii. 353.
Mary, British brig, cut out and fired by the *Wasp*, iii. 92.
Mary E. Thompson, merchantman, captured by Confederate privateer *Jefferson Davis*, iv. 92.
Mary Goodell, merchantman, captured by Confederate privateer *Jefferson Davis*, iv. 92.
Mashonda, frigate of Rais Hammida, Algerian Admiral, iii. 345–347; captured by Captain Downes of the *Epervier*, 347.
Mason, James Murray, Confederate Commissioner to England, in company with John Slidell, sails in the blockade-runner *Theodora*, iv. 141; arrives at Cardenas, Cuba, and proceeds to Havana, *ib.*; sails in the *Trent* for St. Thomas, 143; is taken off the *Trent* and carried into Boston, 147–149; he and Slidell are released, 156.
Mastico, Tripolitan ketch, captured by Decatur, i. 346; he sails in it to fire the *Philadelphia*, 348–356; its name changed to the *Intrepid*, 358. See *Intrepid*.
Mathews, Jack, an old man-of-war tar, on the ironclad *Essex*, gallant conduct of, iv. 261; death of, 265.
Mattabesett, Federal gun-boat, iv. 457.
Matterface, Lieutenant William, in the attack on the American ship *General Armstrong*, iii. 194.
Maurepas, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 127.
Mayo, W. R., his report of the assault on Fort Fisher, iv. 520.
Medicines excluded by blockade of Southern ports, iv. 56.
Mediterranean, second war with African pirates in the, iii. 339–358.
Medway, British liner, captures the *Siren*, iii. 79.
Medway, British frigate, with Farragut's fleet at New Orleans, iv. 323.
Melampus, British war-ship, i. 406, 407.
Mellish, British brig, captured by Paul Jones, i. 79.
Memphis, battle of, iv. 298–307; railroad communication with, cut off, 266, 267.
Memphis, armed merchantman, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Mercedita, armed merchantman, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Mercer, Captain Samuel, iv. 99.
Merchants, British, sufferings by the American Revolution, i. 112, 113, 127.

Mercury, Dutch packet, Henry Laurens, Ambassador to Holland, sails on, iv. 153; the British frigate *Vestal* overhauls her and takes Mr. Laurens from, *ib.*

Merrimac, United States screw frigate, launched, iv. 15; the old frigate transformed into a floating fort, 186; reconstructed, 186–188; particulars of building, 187; the best and heaviest guns placed on her, 188; her engines in bad condition, *ib.*; named the *Virginia*, but not known in history by that name, 189; starts on a trial trip, 197; the *Congress* and *Cumberland* harmlessly open fire on her, 200; she rams the *Cumberland*, 202; opens fire on and silences the Federal batteries, 207; attacks the *Congress*, which surrenders, *ib.*; comparison of her guns and armament with the *Monitor*, 217, 218; Captain Worden tries to find a vulnerable spot, 222; she runs aground twice, 223; tries to ram the *Monitor*, 224; attempts made to board the *Monitor*, 225; fires at the *Minnesota*, *ib.*; steams back to Norfolk, 229; leak discovered, 230; the gunnery better than the *Monitor's*, 232; the *Merrimac* overhauled at Norfolk, 234; Commodore Tattnall relieves Buchanan in command, *ib.*; Tattnall takes the *Merrimac* down to Hampton Roads, *ib.*; the *Monitor* retreats from, 235; blown up on Craney Island, 237.

Mervine, Captain, attempts to march on Los Angeles, but is driven back, iii. 398.

Metacomet, Federal gun-boat, iv. 386.

Metsko Devantigers, Japanese reporters, iii. 455.

Mexican War, the navy's part in the, iii. 424, 428, 429.

Mexico, Gulf of, naval operations in the, iii. 402–428; Farragut's operations in the, iv. 357.

Mexico, French troops enter, iv. 367.

Miami, Federal gun-boat, iv. 454.

Milford, British frigate, encounter with Paul Jones, i. 77.

Miller, Captain Samuel, assists Commodore Barney with his marines, ii. 409, 410.

Milwaukee, Federal gun-boat, sunk by a torpedo, iv. 406.

Minerva, British frigate, Captain of, refuses to fight the *Essex*, and is branded as a coward, ii. 39–41.

Minerva, English privateer, captured by the *Alliance*, i. 297.

Minneapolis, United States cruiser, iv. 534.

Minnesota, United States frigate, compared with Arnold's *Congress*, iv. 3.

Minnesota, American frigate, iv. 99.

Mississippi, the British grab at the Valley of the, iii. 229, 230.

Mississippi, Federal side-wheel steamer, iv. 314.

Mississippi, Federal gun-boat, goes aground in front of Port Hudson, is fired and abandoned, iv. 358.

Mississippi squadron transferred to the Navy Department, iv. 349; ships composing the, 245–249.

Mississippi River, blockade of the entrance to, iv. 124–126; opening of the, by Federal Navy, 240.

Mississippi, Valley of, the British plan to get possession of, iii. 229, 230.

Mississippi Valley, practically all Confederate territory till opened by the Federal Navy, iv. 240.

Mitchell, Lieutenant-commander J. G., iv. 369.

Mobile, Ala., Porter's views on attack on, iv. 341.

Mobile, fortifications of, described by Mahan, iv. 379–383.

Mobile Bay, description of, iv.

377 ; Confederate defences of, ashore and afloat, 379.
Mohawk, United States screw sloop, built, iv. 16 ; Captain S. W. Godon, 163 ; rescues the crew of the *Peerless*, 167.
Mohican, United States frigate, cuts out the steamer *Forward* on the coast of Mexico, iv. 553.
Monarch, Federal ram, in attack on Fort Pillow, iv. 301 ; attacks and sinks the *Beauregard*, 302.
Monitor, Federal ironclad, iv. 191 ; rapid work in constructing, 192 ; particulars of building, 192–194 ; her passage to Hampton Roads, 215 ; commanded by Captain J. L. Worden, *ib.* ; comparison of armament with that of the *Merrimac*, 217, 218 ; the fight with the *Merrimac*, 220 ; superiority of the *Monitor's* revolving turret, 221 ; the *Merrimac* tries to ram, 224, 225 ; her pilot-house struck and her captain disabled, 225 ; retires to Fortress Monroe, 226 ; her gunnery was poor, 231 ; the battle an unparalleled lesson in naval warfare, 233 ; letter from the crew to Captain Worden, 233, 234 ; bombards the batteries at Sewell's Point, 235 ; ordered to Beaufort, N. C., 237 ; founders at sea in a gale, *ib.*
Monitors, most efficient and safest style of coast-defence ships, iv. 194.
Monongahela, Federal gun-boat, passes the batteries of Port Hudson, iv. 358 ; Commander James H. Strong, 389.
Monroe, ——, Mayor of New Orleans, objects to surrendering the city to Farragut, iv. 338.
Monsieur, French privateer, in the fleet of Paul Jones, i. 234 ; captures a Holland ship, 235.
Montagu, British frigate, rescues the *Bonne Citoyenne* from the *Hornet*, ii. 180.
Montauk, Federal monitor, shells and burns the Confederate ironclad *Nashville*, iv. 480.
Monterey, Cal., Captain Catesby Jones takes possession of, iii. 390 ; the American fleet under Captain Sloat take possession of, 392.
Montezuma, American ship, i. 316.
Montezuma, British whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 8.
Montgomery, American brig, fight with the *Surinam*, ii. 254.
Montgomery, Captain J. E., at Fort Pillow, iv. 290 ; retreats, 297.
Montgomery, John B., takes possession of settlement on San Francisco Bay, iii. 392.
Monticello, Federal frigate, iv. 99.
Montmorency, Federal merchantship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Moore, Captain, i. 15 ; killed on the *Margaretta*, i. 22.
Moore, Confederate cotton-clad steamer, iv. 321 ; rams and sinks the *Varuna*, 334 ; fired by the *Cayuga* and *Oneida*, *ib.*
Morgan, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 380.
Morris, Captain Charles, wit of, in an emergency, ii. 58 ; shot through the body in the *Guerrière* fight, 88 ; placed in command of the *Adams*, iii. 57 ; runs the blockade in the Chesapeake, 57, 58 ; he cruises on the coast of Africa, 58 ; goes in search of the Jamaica fleet, *ib.* ; sails to Newfoundland, thence to Ireland, and after taking a few prizes is chased by the *Tigris*, 59 ; again chased for forty hours, 59, 60 ; his crew attacked by scurvy, 60; his ship is driven on a rock, *ib.* ; attacked by a British fleet and compelled to burn his ship, 62 ; appointed to command of the *Florida*, iv. 424 ; during his absence on shore Captain Collins of the *Wachusett* captures her

and takes her to the United States, *ib.*
Morris, Lieutenant George U., iv. 201 ; attacks the *Merrimac*, *ib.* ; his ship is rammed, 201, 202 ; refuses to surrender, 202–204 ; his gallantry commended, 204, 205.
Morris, Captain Henry W., iv. 314.
Morris Island, Charleston, iv. 467.
Morse, Jedidiah, his description of the South Carolina islands, iv. 31.
Mosher, unarmored Confederate boat, Captain Sherman commanding, iv. 321, 329 ; fired at and sunk by the *Hartford*, *ib.*
Mosquito, American ship, chases and captures a pirate brig, iii. 335.
Mottoes, naval, on men-of-war, iii. 30.
Mound City, armor-plated Federal gun-boat, built by Eads, iv. 245 ; Captain A. H. Kilty commands, 289 ; rammed by the *Van Dorn*, 294 ; Confederate shell bursts her boiler, 307 ; in Porter's fleet before Vicksburg, 363 ; Lieutenant A. R. Langthorne commands, 370.
Mowatt, Captain, attack of, on Portland, Maine, i. 24–26.
Muckie, bombarded and burned by the American frigate *Columbia*, iii. 376–378.
Mugford, Captain James, captures a transport with 1,500 barrels of powder, i. 203.
Mullany, Commander J. R. M., iv. 389.
Murphy, Lieutenant J. McLeod, iv. 363.
Murray, British gun-boat, iii. 143.
Murray, Captain Alexander, beats off two British gun-ships, i. 207.
Murray, Colonel J., with 1,000 British troops assaults Plattsburg and Saranac, ii. 355 ; burns the public stores at both places and then retreats, *ib.*
Nahant, Federal ironclad, Commander John Downes, iv. 480 ; at Charleston, 485.
Naiad, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, 415.
Nancy, English merchantman, captured by the *Raleigh* and *Alfred*, i. 130.
Nancy, British brigantine, captured by the *Lee*, i. 197–199.
Nantucket, Federal ironclad, iv. 480.
Napier on the character of the veterans sent to America, iii. 134.
Napoleon III., Emperor of France, his views in regard to Texas and Mexico modified by the surrender of New Orleans, iv. 340 ; tries to persuade Texas to secede from the Confederacy, 368.
Narcissus, British frigate, attacks the American schooner *Surveyor*, ii. 417.
Narragansett Indian impressed by the British, a, iii. 293.
Nashville, Confederate cruiser, blockaded in the Great Ogeechee River, iv. 479 ; attacked and burned by Captain Worden of the monitor *Montauk*, 480.
Natchez, Tenn., surrenders to Captain Craven of the *Brooklyn*, iv. 340.
National sea-power, curious chain of events that led to creation of, i. 1, 2.
Nautilus, American cruiser, in the attack on Tripoli, i. 374.
Nautilus, East India Company's cruiser, surrenders to the *Peacock*, iii. 285.
Naval architecture, a point on, iii. 227.
Naval armament, means for furnishing United Colonies with, i. 35.
Naval calls, iii. 471.
Naval discipline, effect of, on raw recruits, iv. 250.
Naval forces of the United States

compared with those of Great Britain in 1812, ii. 21–23.
Naval officers, old-time, life led by, iii. 305–307; American, work that they have had to do in out-of-the-way parts of the world in times of peace, 359–386; disloyalty of, at commencement of the Civil War, iv. 70.
Naval operations in the Gulf of Mexico, iii. 402–428.
Naval terms applied to war-ships, iii. 54.
Navy, British, in American waters, i. 195.
Navy, colonial, creation of a, i. 30.
Navy of the United Colonies, regulations of, i. 34.
Navy, the American, at the battle of New Orleans, iii. 229.
Neapolitan, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Neilds, Ensign H. C., heroic conduct of, iv. 394.
Neosho, Federal gun-boat, iv. 370.
Nereyda, Peruvian cruiser, captured the American whalers *Walker* and *Barclay*, iii. 7; is dismantled by the *Essex* and sent to the Viceroy of Peru, *ib.*
Netley, British brig, iii. 111.
Neutral ports, violations of, iv. 427.
Neutrality laws observed by American naval officers, iii. 28, 29.
Neutrality, the law of, in open ports, iv. 44.
New Carthage, Grant crosses from, to surround Vicksburg, iv. 363.
New Castle, British frigate, attacks the *Constitution*, iii. 260.
New Ironsides, successful Federal ironclad, iv. 190, 480.
New Madrid, on Missouri River, captured by Pope, iv. 276.
New Orleans, British attack on, iii. 230; blockaded by the *Brooklyn*, iv. 44; attacked by Farragut's squadron, 314–337; Farragut demands the surrender of the city, 338; General Butler takes possession of, 339.
New Providence taken by Commodore Hopkins, i. 56.
Newton, Isaac, first Assistant Engineer of the *Monitor*, iv. 216.
New York, United States cruiser, iv. 533.
New Zealander, British ship, captured by Porter, iii. 14.
Niagara, British merchantman, captured, ii. 265; Elliott's ship in battle of Lake Erie, 292.
Niagara, American ship, Perry shifts his flag from the *Lawrence* to, ii. 321; after the war is sunk in Little Bay, 337.
Niagara, United States screw frigate, launched, iv 15.
Nichols, Lieutenant Edward T., iv. 315.
Nichols, Captain Samuel, first Captain of marines in American Navy, i. 53.
Nicholson, Captain James, i. 187.
Nicholson, Lieutenant John B., sent by Decatur to take charge of the *Macedonian* when she surrendered, ii. 134; carries the *Epervier* into Savannah after her fight with the *Peacock*, iii. 77; transferred to the *Siren*, *ib.*; a story of sailors' superstitions, 78, 79.
Nicholson, Commander J. W. A., iv. 386.
Nicholson, Captain Samuel, appointed to the American frigate *Constitution*, i. 312.
"Ninety-day fleet, the," iv. 39.
Nipsic, United States cruiser, thrown ashore at Samoa, iv. 554.
Noah, Mordecai M., American Consul at Tunis, demands indemnity for seizure of the *Abellino* prizes, iii. 355.
Nocton, British brig, captured by Porter, iii. 2; recaptured by the *Belvidera*, 3.

Nonita, American schooner, in attack on Alvarado, iii. 410.
Nonsuch, American frigate, in Perry's cruise to South America, iii. 327; Perry makes it his flagship, *ib.*; the crew infected with yellow fever, 329.
Norderling, Mr., Swedish Consul at Algiers in 1815, iii. 348.
Norfolk, American ship, i. 316.
Norfolk Navy Yard, loss of the, iv. 66–83.
North, Lord, despair of, on hearing of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, i. 299.
Nukahiva, Marquesas Islands, Porter brings the *Essex* and his fleet of captured whalers here to refit, iii. 16; a sailor's paradise, 19; an incipient mutiny at, 21–23.
Nymphe, British frigate, chased by the *President* and *Congress*, ii. 151.
Ocracoke Inlet, fort at, iv. 108.
Octorara, Federal gun-boat, iv. 386.
Ogdensburg, N. Y., British attack on, ii. 268.
"Old Glory" first hoisted, i. 135.
"Old Ironsides" (the *Constitution*), i. 312.
"Old Sow, The," ii. 267.
Old-time naval officers, iii. 305–307.
Old War Horse, another name for the *Benton*, iv. 249.
Olney, Captain Joseph, i. 163.
"On to Canada," the war-cry of 1812, ii. 20.
Oneida, American war-brig, ii. 264; captures the *Lord Nelson*, 265; Commodore Earle attempts to capture, 266.
Oneida, Federal screw corvette, iv. 314.
Oneida, Federal gun-boat, iv. 389.
Ontario, American sloop-of-war, sent against the Dey of Algiers in 1815, iii. 343.
Ontario, Lake, operations on, iii. 113–129.
Ordronaux, Captain J., attacked by the British frigate *Endymion*, iii. 202–207.
Oreto, Confederate cruiser. See *Florida*.
Orpheus, British frigate, captures the *Confederacy*, i. 298.
Orpheus, British frigate, with the *Sherburne*, attacks and captures the *Frolic*, iii. 65, 66.
Osage, Federal gun-boat, iv, 369; sunk by a torpedo, 406.
Ossipee, Federal gun-boat, iv. 389.
Ottawa, Federal gun-boat, iv. 163.
Ottawa, Federal war-ship, attacked ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Otter Creek, Vt., Macdonough fortifies, iii. 137.
Ouachita, Federal gun-boat, iv. 369.
Owen, Lieutenant-commander E. K., iv. 363, 369.
Ozark, Federal gun-boat, iv. 370.
Pacific coast, naval operations on the, in 1842, iii. 389–428.
Pakenham, Sir Edward Michael, in command of the British forces to attack New Orleans, reaches the Chandeleur Islands, iii. 230.
Pallas, American ship, i. 232; *Countess of Scarborough* surrenders to, 267.
Palmetto State, Confederate ironclad, iv. 473; armament of, *ib.*; attacks the *Mercedita*, 474; paroles her crew, 475.
Palmira, Porto Rico privateer, plunders American schooner *Coquette*, and is captured by the *Grampus*, iii. 332.
Pamlico Sound, N. C., a rendezvous for Confederate privateers, iv. 94.
Pandrita, pirate ship, captured by the *Grampus*, iii. 332.
Paper blockade, Navy Department tries to establish, iv. 41.
Parker, Captain John, at Lexington, i. 14.
Parker, Lieutenant, in the *Java* fight, ii. 165.
Parker, Lieutenant George, dies at sea, iii. 78; a story of sailors' superstition in connection with his death, 78, 79.

Parker, Lieutenant, the *Congress* surrenders to, iv. 208.
Parsons, P. Usher, fleet surgeon in the battle of Lake Erie, ii. 294.
Pass à Loutre, Federal fleet retreat down the, iv. 137.
Passaic, Federal monitor, iv. 237, 480, 490.
Patapsco, Federal ironclad, iv. 480, 490.
Patterson, Master-commandant William T., attacks the British camp, iii. 239; sets fire to and abandons his ships, 240.
Paul Jones, American privateer, ii. 251.
Paulding, Captain Hiram, breaks up the nest of plotters against the Federal Government, iv. 71.
Paving-stones used as missiles to capture the *Gaspé*, i. 9.
Pawnee, Federal frigate, iv. 99, 163.
Peabody, Federal transport, iv. 100.
Peacock, American corvette, meets the brig-sloop *Epervier*, iii. 66; captures the sloop, 67–71; cruises, 78; attached to Decatur's fleet, 271; captures prizes and the cruiser *Nautilus*, 285.
Peacock, British brig, encounters the American sloop *Hornet*, ii. 181; the battle, 183; her captain killed, *ib.*; sinks, 184; good treatment of the officers and men by the Americans, 187; comparison of the ships, 190.
Peake, Captain William, attacks the *Hornet*, ii. 181; is killed, 183; proud of his ship, 190.
Pearce, Lieutenant John, iv. 370.
Pearl, British frigate, captures the *Lexington*, i. 68; the latter escapes, *ib.*
Pearson, Captain Richard, encounters the *Bonhomme Richard*, i. 243, 245; surrenders, 259; anecdote of, 262–264; conduct of, 274; treated as if he had won a victory, 275.
Pechell, Captain Samuel John, in charge of expedition sent against Craney's Island, ii. 398.
Peerless, Federal transport, lost near Cape Hatteras, iv. 167.
Peiho River, attack on Chinese forts in the, iii. 382.
Pelican, British frigate, goes in search of the American sloop *Argus*, ii. 362; attacks the *Argus*, 363, 364; captures the sloop, 364–367; takes her into Plymouth, 371.
Pembina, Federal gun-boat, iv. 163.
Pendergrast, American Flag Officer G. J., his proclamation, iv. 40.
Pendergrast, Lieutenant Austin, takes command of the *Congress*, iv. 208; surrenders to Lieutenant Parker of the *Beaufort*, *ib.*; assists in transferring the wounded, 209; escapes by swimming. *ib.*
Penguin, British brig-sloop, is beaten by the *Hornet*, iii. 273–281.
Penguin, Federal gun-boat, at Port Royal, iv. 171.
Pensacola, United States screw sloop, iv. 16; Captain Henry W. Morris, 314.
Pensacola Navy Yard surrendered to Confederates, iv. 112.
Perkins, Lieutenant-commander George H., iv. 386.
Perry, Federal brig, captures the *Savannah*, iv. 89.
Perry, Christopher Raymond, gallant conduct of, i. 296.
Perry, Commodore Matthew Calbraith, brother of Oliver H. Perry, sent against the Mexican port of Frontera, iii. 410; captures the Mexican fleet, *ib.*; captures Tabasco, 413; conducts the operations during the siege of Vera Cruz, 424; his early services, 435; a Japanese poem dedicated to him, 437; his work in opening the ports of Japan, 439; ap-

pointed to the Japan mission, 443 ; anchors off Uraga, *ib.* ; reception by the Japanese, 444–447 ; difficulty in opening negotiations, 449, 450 ; the Japanese Governor accompanied by three reporters, 455 ; permission from the Emperor to receive the President's message, *ib.* ; the Emperor grants all that is asked, 457–463 ; amusing features of the expedition, 463 ; assigned to the *Fulton* 2*d*, iv. 11 ; his opinion of her, *ib.*

Perry, Oliver Hazard, in command of a fleet of gun-boats at Newport, R. I., in 1812, ii. 280 ; ordered to join Commodore Chauncey, 282 ; inspects the navy yard at Black Rock, 283 ; finds five ships being constructed at Erie, Pa., *ib.*; hastens to Pittsburg for cannon-balls, 285 ; returns to Erie, 286 ; starts for Buffalo in a row-boat, *ib.*; compels the British to abandon the Niagara River, 287 ; stricken with fever through overwork, 288 ; ordered to co-operate with General Harrison, *ib.*; his appeal for men, 289 ; starts on an expedition with an inadequate force, *ib.*; chooses the *Lawrence* as his flagship, 290 ; gets his fleet in deep water, 291 ; cruises on Lake Erie, 292 ; is joined by officers and men from the *Constitution*, *ib.*; sails up the lake to join General Harrison, 292 ; arrives at Put-in-Bay, 293 ; confers with General Harrison, 294 ; sickness, *ib.*; his fleet anchors in Put-in-Bay, *ib.*; sketch of Perry's fleet, 295 ; sketch of Barclay's fleet, 296 ; comparison of the commanders, 300 ; his thoughtfulness for his men, 305 ; the battle of Lake Erie commences, 309 ; closes in on the British, 311 ; loads and fires his own guns, 315 ; his flagship a wreck, 317 ; shifts his flag to the *Niagara*, 321 ; the decisive movement, 322 ; the British surrender, 324 ; "We have met the enemy and they are ours!" 325 ; receives the swords of the British officers on the *Lawrence*, 328 ; his letter to the Secretary of the Navy, 332 ; results of his victory, 333; promoted from rank of master-commandant to captain, 334 ; his praise of Lieutenant Elliott, 336 ; value of ships captured in the battle, 337 ; his squadron at Erie, *ib.*; Washington Irving's opinion of the victory, 338 ; his duel with Captain Heath, iii. 317 ; detailed to cruise in South American waters, 327 ; sails up the Orinoco, *ib.*; demands compensation for American vessels, 329 ; contracts yellow fever, *ib.*; dies while entering the Port of Spain, Trinidad Island, 330 ; buried at Newport, R. I., *ib.*

Pert, American schooner, ii. 270.

Perthshire, British merchantman, captured off Mobile, iv. 43 ; released by the *Niagara*, *ib.* ; claims compensation, 44.

Petrel, American schooner, in attack on Alvarado, iii. 410.

Petrel, Confederate privateer, iv. 93 ; chases the *St. Lawrence*, which fires into and sinks her, 94.

Phelps, Captain S. S., appointed to command of the *Conestoga*, iv. 251 ; convoys General Grant down the Mississippi, *ib.*; captures the Confederate steamer *Eastport*, 267 ; takes command of her, *ib.*; before Fort Pillow, 290 ; Lieutenant-commander of the *Eastport*, 369.

Philadelphia, American gondola, i. 90 ; on Lake Champlain, 100.

Philadelphia, American frigate, sent to Tripoli, i. 335 ; sunk on a reef, 343 ; raised by the Tripolitans, 344 ; boarded and fired by Decatur. 349–358.

Phœbe, British frigate, attempts to attack the *Essex*, iii. 25, 26 ;

is scared off, *ib.*; with the *Cherub* makes another attack on the *Essex*, 30–43.
Pico Andres, Mexican Governor of Los Angeles, iii. 397; breaks his parole, *ib.*
Picton, British war-schooner, captured by the *Constitution*, iii. 242.
Pike, Zebulon M., explorer, at storming of Toronto, ii. 341; killed by the explosion of a magazine, 342.
Pinola, Federal screw gun-boat, iv. 316.
Piracy discoveries at Cape Cruz, South America, iii. 335.
Pirate caves with the bones of dead in them, iii. 324, 325.
Piratical assaults on Yankee traders, iii. 366.
Pitcairn, Major, at Lexington, i. 14.
Pitchforks used by haymakers in their attack on the *Margaretta*, i. 21.
Pittsburg, armor-plated Federal gun-boat, built by Eads, iv. 245; Captain Egbert Thompson commands, 290; before Vicksburg, 363, 370.
Pittsburg Landing, fight at, iv. 284.
Plantagenet, British liner, assists in the attack on the *General Armstrong*, iii. 188, 194, 196–198.
Planter, Confederate transport, turned over to the Federals by Robert Small, a negro slave, iv. 501, 502.
Plattsburg Bay, operations of Macdonough in, iii. 145, 150.
"Playing ball with the red coats," ii. 268.
Plunger, Holland submarine boat, iv. 545.
Po Adam, Malay chief, rescues Captain Endicott, iii. 370; aids Captain Downes in his attack on Quallah Battoo, 374.
Pocahontas, Federal frigate, iv. 163.
Poictiers, British frigate, recaptures the *Frolic* from the *Wasp*, ii. 118.
Policy, British whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 8.
Polk, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 127.
Polly, American privateer, attacks the English sloop-of-war *Indian*, ii. 242.
Pomone, British frigate, assists in the capture of the *President*, iii. 222.
Pope, Captain John, his report on the retreat of the Federal fleet, iv. 137; captured New Madrid, 276; fortifies the river, *ib.*; shuts Confederates in, *ib.*
Porcupine, American schooner, in battle of Lake Erie, ii. 295.
Porpoise, American schooner, in fleet sent to South America to punish pirates, iii. 331.
Port Hudson, Farragut runs his squadron past, iv. 357; the *Albatross*, *Monongahela*, and *Kineo* successfully pass the batteries of, 358; the *Mississippi* and the *Lancaster* fired and sunk below, *ib.*
Porter, Midshipman David, assists Lieutenant Rodgers in charge of captured French frigate *Insurgent*, i. 323; sent to Tripoli, 335; sent from the *Enterprise* to take possession of the *Tripoli*, 335, 336; lands and fires gunboats in the port of Tripoli, 340; surrenders to the Tripolitans, 343; his experience and training, ii. 33, 34; captures the corvette *Alert*, 42; crew of, plan a rescue, 44; receives an insulting challenge from Sir James Yeo, 348; starts on a second cruise in the *Essex*, iii. 1; cruises off Port Praya, 2; captures the British brig *Nocton*, *ib.*; reaches Fernando de Noronha, 3; Bainbridge directs him to pose as Sir James Yeo, *ib.*; captures the schooner *Elizabeth*, 4; left free to choose his own course, *ib.*;

rounds Cape Horn, *ib.*; dysentery among his crew, 5, 6; encounters fearful storms, 6; a panic on board, *ib.*; sails for Valparaiso, 7; overhauls the *Nereyda*, throws her guns and arms overboard, *ib.*; disguises his ship, 8; captures the British whalers *Barclay*, *Montezuma*, *Georgiana*, and *Policy*, *ib*; captures the whalers *Atlantic* and *Greenwich*, *ib.*; forms a squadron, 10; captures the whaler *Charlton*, the ships *Seringapatam* and *New Zealander*, 14; captures the *Sir Andrew Hammond*, 16; refits his ship at Nukahiva, *ib.*; the prisoners plan to capture the Yankee force, 21; an incipient mutiny, *ib.*; he sails from Nukahiva, 23; waits for the British frigate, the *Phœbe*, 24; gives a reception to the officials of the city, 25; the *Phœbe* arrives and attempts to attack him, 25–28; he challenges the *Phœbe*, 29; a heavy squall interferes, 31; the *Essex* disabled and the enemy gives chase, *ib.*; Porter retires into neutral waters, 32; Porter's running gear disabled, 36; he surrenders his ship, 43; is sent to New York on the *Essex*, *Junior*, 49; escapes in a fog, *ib.*; aids the defence of Baltimore, 53; services, death, and burial, *ib.*; operating against the pirates of South America, iii. 333; endeavors to get support of the local governments, *ib.*; compels a Porto Rico alcalde to show respect to American officers, 336; court-martialed, *ib.*; is suspended and resigns his commission, *ib.*

Porter, Commander David D., his idea of attacking New Orleans, iv. 313; finds New Orleans fishermen good spies, *ib.*; arranges the expedition, *ib.*; commands the mortar fleet up the Mississippi River, 325; placed in charge of the Mississippi squadron, 349; tin-clads added to his squadron, *ib.*; tries to get in behind Vicksburg, 358; is unsuccessful, 363; attacks the fortifications of Grand Gulf, 367; sent with General Banks's expedition to Shreveport, La., 369; arrives at Alexandria, 370; captures the *Abby Bradford* from the *Sumter*, 413; disagreement with General Butler at Fort Fisher, 508.

Porter, Captain John, in command of the *Greyhound* in South America, iii. 333.

Porter, Confederate Navy Constructor J. L., assists in making the working drawings for the *Merrimac*, iv. 185.

Porter, Captain William D., iv. 249; in Commodore Foote's fleet, 255; severely scalded, 265.

Portland, Maine, atrocities of the British at, i. 24–26, 32; influence of atrocities, 196.

Port Royal, Federal gun-boat, iv. 389; capture of, 162–182.

Portsmouth, American frigate, in the bombardment of Chinese forts, iii. 380–382.

Potomac, American frigate, attacks and punishes the Malays at Quallah Battoo, iii. 373–375.

Powhatan, Federal frigate, captures the *Abby Bradford* from the *Sumter*, iv. 413.

Preble, American sloop. See *Rising Sun*.

Preble, Captain Edward, i. 26; in command of the *Constitution*, 346; attacks the city of Tripoli, 359; Congress gives him a gold medal, 378.

Preble, Lieutenant George H., iv. 315.

President, American frigate, built, i. 312; sent to Tripoli, 335; encounters and is fired on by the corvette *Little Belt*, ii. 7; Captain John Rodgers sent to look for the *Guerrière*, 8; chases the British frigate *Belvidera*,

29–32 ; the frigate escapes, 32 ; mentioned, 121 ; chases the *Nymphe*, 151 ; chases the *Curlew*, 358 ; a lieutenant of the *President* boards the *Highflyer*, *ib.* ; special efforts ordered to capture the *President*, 359 ; termed "The Waggon" by the British, 360 ; Decatur transferred to, iii. 212; attacked by the British fleet, 216 ; surrenders, 222 ; is carried to the Bermudas, 226 ; her dimensions, 227.

Press-gang riots in Boston, i. 395, 397.

Press-gangs, raised in England, i. 156 ; methods of the, 386, 387 ; number of Americans enslaved by the, ii. 2–4.

Prevost, Sir George, attacks Sackett's Harbor, ii. 345 ; mistakes trees for troops, 346 ; in command of "Wellington's Invincibles" at Plattsburg, iii. 147 ; defeated, 169, 170 ; dies of chagrin, 183.

Price, Confederate gun-boat, rams the *Cincinnati*, iv. 293 ; disabled by the *Carondelet*, 294.

Prince de Neufchâtel, American privateer, ii. 253 ; attacked by the British frigate *Endymion*, iii. 202-207.

Prince of Orange, British brig, captured by the *Surprise*, i. 124, 125.

Prince Regent, British ship, iii. 129.

Princeton, Ericsson's first screw steamship, iv. 12 ; Captain Stockton assigned to her, 14 ; the "Peacemaker," one of her guns, bursts, *ib.* ; her success pronounced, *ib.*

Pring, Captain, in the battle of Lake Champlain, iii. 166 ; surrenders, *ib.*

Prisoners, American, in England, bad treatment of, i. 122.

Prisons, British, iii. 288–304.

Privateer and a letter of marque, difference between, iii. 242.

Privateers, commissioned by Congress, i. 33 ; authorized by General Court of Massachusetts, 196 ; by Connecticut and Rhode Island, 197; by General Washington, *ib.* ; work accomplished by them up to 1777, 217 ; another account of them, 220, 221; captured prisoners from privateers on prison-ship *Jersey*, 221–226 ; result of licensing of, iii. 324.

Privateers, American, capture sixteen English cruisers during the Revolutionary War, i. 302.

Privateers in the War of 1812, only a few made money, ii. 233–258 ; two hundred and fifty commissioned during the war, 240.

Proctor, General, his incursion into Ohio prevented by the result of the battle of Lake Erie, ii. 333.

Protector, American gun-ship, blows up the British privateer *Admiral Duff*, i. 207; beats off the frigate *Thames*, *ib.*

Providence, brig of first American Navy, i. 39, 57 ; commanded by Captain John P. Rathburne, descends on New Providence, Bahamas, 186.

Quaker City, armed merchantman, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.

Quallah Battoo, Malays of, attacked by the American frigate *Potomac*, iii. 373, 374 ; bombarded by the *Columbia*, 376.

Queen Charlotte, British ship, in battle of Lake Erie, ii. 296 ; sunk in Little Bay, 337.

Queen of France, American ship, i. 280, 281.

Queen of the West, Federal ram, at Fort Pillow, iv. 301 ; sinks the *Lowell*, *ib.* ; rammed by the *Beauregard*, *ib.* ; sent to attack Port Hudson, 351 ; abandoned by the Federals, 352.

Racehorse, British brig, captured by the *Andrea Doria*, i. 69.

Radford, Captain William, absent from duty, iv. 201.
Rainbow, British gun-ship, captures the *Hancock*, i. 185.
Rais Hammida, the terror of the Mediterranean, iii. 344, 346; killed, 347.
Raleigh, American man-of-war, sent to France, i. 130; attacks the *Druid*, 131; loads her supplies, 132; returns to America, 133; captured, 194.
Raleigh, Confederate gun-boat, assists in taking crew off the *Congress*, iv. 208.
Randolph, American frigate, i. 160; blown up, 162.
Ransom paid to the Dey of Algiers, i. 309, 310.
Ransom, Lieutenant George M., iv. 315.
Rathbone, Captain John P., i. 186; releases American prisoners, *ib.*; commands the *Queen of France*, 281.
Rattlesnake, American ship, captured by the *Leander*, ii. 387.
Ravenel, Dr. St. Julien, aids in fitting out torpedo boats, iv. 497.
Razee, a line-of-battle ship, ii. 403, iii. 56.
Read, Lieutenant Charles W., appointed to command the *Clarence*, iv. 424; captures the *Tacony* and burns the *Clarence*, *ib.*; captures the *Archer* and cuts out the *Caleb Cushing*, *ib.*; captured, *ib.*
Red River, Texas, blackaded, iv. 358.
Red River dam, iv. 372–374.
Reefer, American schooner, iii. 410.
Reid, Commodore George C., bombards and burns Malay towns, iii. 375–379.
Reid, Captain Samuel C., sails from New York Harbor, iii. 187; arrives at Fayal, *ib.*; the brig *Carnation*, accompanied by the *Plantagenet* and the frigate *Rota*, enter the harbor, 188; attacked in a neutral port, 189; heavy loss of the enemy, *ib.*; the population gather to watch the issue, 190; the *Carnation* attacks with a fleet of boats, *ib.*; a fierce hand-to-hand fight, 192; he scuttles and abandons his ship, 200; returns home, 201; is enthusiastically received and honored, *ib.*; his pedigree, *ib.*; originated the arrangement of the stars and stripes in the American flag, *ib.*; dies in New York City, *ib.*
Reilly, Lieutenant James, iii. 81.
Reindeer, British brig-sloop, captured by the *Wasp* (No. 3), iii. 88; armament of, 91; the wounded of, sent to Plymouth, *ib.*
Renshaw, Master-commandant James, on the *Enterprise* after the *Boxer-Enterprise* battle, ii. 386.
Reprisal, American brig, captures a number of prizes, i. 70; fight with the *Shark*, 71; Franklin sails for France on the, 114; close call of, 118; ordered to leave France, 119; founders, *ib.*
Resolute, Federal steamer, at Acquia Creek, iv. 81.
Resolution, British brig, captured by the *Hornet*, ii. 181, 191.
Retaliation, American gun-ship, formerly the French ship *Croyable*, i. 316, 330, 400.
Revenge, American sloop, i. 89.
Revenge, American man-of-war, i. 126; takes numerous prizes, *ib.*
Rhind, Commander A. C., iv. 480; Commander of the *Louisiana*, 510.
Rhode Island, first naval fight in waters of, i. 2.
Richmond, United States screw sloop, iv. 16; Captain Thornton A. Jenkins, 386.
Richmond, Va., railroad communication cut off from, iv. 267.
Ricot, Captain, in Paul Jones's fleet, i. 232.
Rifled cannon introduced into the American Navy, iv. 20, 21.

Rising Sun, American sloop, renamed the *Preble*, iii. 136, 138, 140.
"River Defence Squadron," Confederate, iv. 297.
Roanoke, United States screw frigate, launched, iv. 15.
Roanoke Island, expedition to, iv. 109.
Robertson, Lieutenant John Downie, in the batttle of Lake Champlain, iii. 165.
Robinson, Captain Isaiah, i. 69; captures the *Racehorse*, *ib.*
Rodgers, Rear-admiral John, with Midshipman David Porter and others, sail the captured frigate *Insurgent* with 173 French on her, i. 323; brings the ship safely into St. Kitts, *ib.*; ready to move his fleet in one hour, ii. 28; starts to intercept a big fleet of merchantmen, 29; chases the *Belvidera*, *ib.*; fires the first shot of the War of 1812, 30; his leg broken, 31; the frigate escapes him, 32; cruises and captures merchantmen and recaptures an American ship, *ib.*; challenged by the *Guerrière*, 72; sails from Boston, 121; chases the British frigate *Nymphe*, 151; chases the *Curlew*, 358; falls in with the British schooner *Highflyer*, and secures her book of private signals and instructions, *ib.*; value and usefulness of the book, 359; ordered to report to General Frémont, iv. 241; buys and fits out merchant-vessels, *ib.*; relieved of his command, 250; appointed head of Board of Naval Officers, 527.
Rodgers, Captain John, iv. 480.
Rodgers, Commander George W., killed on the *Catskill*, iv. 480, 491.
Rodgers, Captain R. C. P., at Port Royal, iv. 163.
Rodman, Captain United States Ordnance Department, his experience with heavy guns, iv. 18, 20.
Rodolph, Federal wrecking steamer, sunk by a torpedo, iv. 406.
Roebuck, British frigate, captures the *Confederacy*, i. 298.
Roosevelt, *Clinton*, proposed steel-plated ship, iv. 9.
Rooster, a sporting, iii. 155.
Rose, British ship, captured by Lieutenant Downes, iii. 10; sent to St. Helena as a cartel, 12.
Rota, British frigate, in the attack on the *General Armstrong*, iii. 188–200.
Rowan, Captain Stephen C., iv. 99; destroys the Confederate fleet at Roanoke Island, 110.
Royal Savage, American schooner, i. 89.
Royal Yacht, Confederate privateer, blockaded by the *Santee* in Galveston, iv. 138.
Russell, Lieutenant John H., iv. 314.
Russell, Lord, correspondence about the *Trent* affair, iv. 150–152; letter of, on the closing of Charleston Harbor, 471, 472.
S. J. Waring, merchantman, captured by Confederate privateer *Jefferson Davis*, iv. 91.
Sabine, Federal sailing ship, rescues the crew of the *Governor*, iv. 167.
Sackett's Harbor, N. Y., chosen as a naval station, ii. 264; attacked by the British, 345.
Sailors, kidnapped, cruelty to, on British ships, i. 387.
Sailor's rights ignored by politicians, ii. 18.
St. Eustatius, Governor of, gives first salute to the American flag, i. 69.
St. James, American privateer, beats off a British frigate, i. 206.
St. John's, British fleet built at, i. 87.
St. Laurent, Captain, deceived by Captain Bainbridge, i. 317.
St. Lawrence, British liner, iii. 129.
St. Louis, Commodore Foote's

flagship, disabled, iv. 271 ; Captain Henry Erben commands, 289.
Sally, purchased by first Marine Committee, i. 39.
Saltonstall, Captain Dudley, i. 46 ; commands the *Trumbull*, 164 ; captain of the *Warren*, 283.
Samoa, hurricane at, iv. 554.
Sand-bar, lifting vessels over a, ii. 289, 290.
San Diego, Cal., John C. Frémont takes possession of, iii. 394.
Sandwich, American privateer, cut out of Puerto Plata by Lieutenant Isaac Hull, i. 329.
San Jacinto, American frigate, iii. 380.
San Jacinto, United States screw sloop, iv. 15 ; Mason and Slidell, Confederate Commissioners, taken to Boston in, 148. See *Mason*, *James Murray*.
San Juan de Ulloa, a castle on Gallega Reef, Vera Cruz, fortification of, iii. 418.
Santa Anna, Mexican General, landed from the American fleet at Vera Cruz, iii. 424 ; the American Government negotiates with him to return to Mexico, 427 ; escorted up the streets of Vera Cruz, *ib.*; is recognized by a squad of soldiers and saluted, *ib.*; again master of Mexican affairs, *ib.*
Santee, Federal frigate, blockades Galveston, iv. 137.
Saranac River, the British retire from, iii. 136.
Saratoga, American frigate, i. 287; captures the *Charming Molly* and two other ships, 292 ; lost in a hurricane, 293.
Saratoga, American privateer, ii. 253.
Saratoga, American corvette, iii. 137, 138 ; Macdonough's flagship in the battle of Lake Champlain, 155.
Sassacus, Federal gun-boat, iv. 456.
Savannah, American frigate, iii. 392.
Savannah, Confederate privateer, captures brig *Joseph*, iv. 88 ; captured by Federal brig *Perry*, 89.
Sciota, Federal screw gun-boat, iv. 315.
Scorpion, American gun-boat, ii. 292.
Scorpion, American cutter, ii. 408.
Scorpion, American schooner, captured by the British, iii. 110.
Scott, Lieutenant-colonel Winfield, at Black Rock, ii. 275 ; takes possession of Squaw Island, 278 ; hauls down the British flag, 344.
Scourge, American privateer, ii. 253.
Scourge, American schooner, ii. 350.
Seahorse, American tender, makes a gallant fight against the British fleet, iii. 233–235.
Sea-power, American, in 1812, ii. 21 ; of Great Britain, 22.
Search, the right of, on the high seas, i. 387 ; reaffirmed, ii. 19.
Seine, French privateer, captured by the American schooner *Enterprise*, i. 330.
Selfredge, Lieutenant-commander T. O., iv. 369.
Selfredge, Lieutenant-commander T. O., Jr., at Fort Fisher, iv. 519.
Self-restraint of Americans, iii. 303.
Selkirk, Earl of, house of, surrounded by Paul Jones, i. 147, 148.
Selma, Confederate gun-boat, iv. 380.
Selman, Captain John, captures ten British vessels and Governor Wright of St. John's, i. 203.
Seminole, Federal frigate, iv. 163.
Seminole, Federal gun-boat, iv. 389.
Semmes, Commander Raphael, his ship capsizes and he loses half the crew, iii. 417 ; takes command of Confederate cruiser

Sumter, iv. 408 ; chases the *Brooklyn*, 409 ; captures the *Golden Rocket*, 410 ; takes five prizes into Cuba, 411 ; takes the *Abby Bradford* to Venezuela, 412 ; the *Powhatan* captures her, 413 ; some of his captures, 415 ; his ship sold to English blockade-runners, *ib.* ; Brazil authorities allow him to use Fernando de Noronha as headquarters, 427 ; appointed to command of *Alabama*, 431 ; ships his officers and men at Terceira, *ib.* ; encounters the *San Jacinto*, 432 ; captures the *Ariel*, *ib.* ; goes to Galveston to intercept transports, *ib.* ; captures the *Hatteras*, *ib.* ; his reception at Cape Town, 434 ; his gallantry, 435 ; cruises in the East Indies, 436 ; fight with the *Kearsarge*, 438–441 ; rescued by the yacht *Deerhound*, 442 ; his reception in England, 447.

Seneca, Federal gun-boat, iv. 163.

Senez, Captain Andre, surrenders to Captain Little of the *Boston*, i. 328, 329.

Sentiment, a touching tale of, iii. 243, 244.

Serapis, British frigate, encounters the *Bonhomme Richard*, i. 243 ; fight with the latter, 245–259 ; surrenders, 259 ; comparative strength of the two ships, 265.

Seringapatam, British ship, captured by Porter, iii. 14.

Severn, British ship, ii. 421.

Seward, William H., his reply to the despatch of the British Government relative to the *Trent* affair, iv. 154–156.

Sewell's Point, Confederate batteries erected at, iv. 195.

Shajackuda Creek, Niagara River, expedition starts from, ii. 275 ; route opened up by Perry, 287.

Shannon, British frigate, ii. 55; blockades Boston, 200 ; challenges the *Chesapeake*, 203 ; captures her, 209–221 ; arrives at Halifax, 222 ; comparison of the two ships, 229.

Shark, American brig, captures five pirate vessels, iii. 331.

Shark, British sloop, fight of, with American brig *Reprisal*, i. 71.

Shaw, Lieutenant, captures the French privateer *Seine*, i. 330.

Sheed, William W., Sailing-master, attacks the British, ii. 402.

Shelburne, British schooner, assists in capturing the *Frolic*, iii. 65.

Shenandoah, Confederate cruiser, destroys American whaling and sealing fleets, iv. 447.

Sherman, Captain, "bravest man in the Confederate squadrons," iv. 321, 329, 340.

Sherman, General Thomas W., commands a force against Port Royal, iv. 164.

Shipbuilder, the private, a factor in the sea power of a nation, iv. 38.

Shipbuilding after the Revolution, i. 304.

Ship-masts retained for use of the crown, i. 15.

Shirk, Lieutenant, supports Grant at Pittsburg Landing, iv. 284 ; commander of Federal gunboat *Tuscumbia*, iv. 363.

Shreveport, La., General Banks sent on expedition to, to frustrate designs of Napoleon III., iv. 368.

Shubrick, Lieutenant J. T., boards the *Peacock* and endeavors to save the ship from sinking, ii. 184.

Shubrick, Commodore William Bradford, in command of the Pacific Coast Squadron, iii. 401.

"Siege of Plattsburg," a popular song, iii. 184.

Silver Wave, Federal Army transport, before Vicksburg, iv. 364.

Simcoe, British gun-boat, iii. 143.

Simes, British schooner, sunk, ii. 271.

Sinclair, Captain Arthur, sent to

take charge of the American fleet west of the Niagara, iii. 106; sails into Lake Huron, 107; destroys St. Joseph, *ib.*; destroys a block-house, 108; returns to Detroit, 109.
Sir Andrew Hammond, British whaler, captured by Porter, iii. 16; recaptured by the *Cherub*, 50.
Sir George Prevost, British gun-boat, iii. 143.
Sir James Yeo, British gun-boat, iii. 143.
Sir Sidney Beckwith, British gun-boat, iii 143.
Sir William Erskine, British sloop, attacked and captured by the American privateer *Thorn*, i. 209.
Siren, American brig, accompanies Decatur on his expedition to fire the *Philadelphia*, i. 348–350; John B. Nicholson placed in command of, ii. 78; cruises on the coast of Africa, *ib.*; is captured, 79.
Slave traffic on the coast of Africa, iii. 360; Admiral Foote's efforts to stamp it out, 363–367.
Slavers, chasing, on the African coast, iii. 360–361.
Slavery, kipnapped sailors subjected to a state of, i. 387.
Slidell, John, Confederate commissioner to France. See *Mason, James Murray*.
Sloat, Captain John Drake, takes possession of Monterey, California, iii. 392; gives up command of the squadron, 394.
Smith, Lieutenant Albert N., iv. 315.
Smith, Lieutenant Joseph B., attacked by the *Merrimac*, iv. 207; stands by his ship until killed, 208.
Smith, Commander Melancthon, iv. 314.
Smith, Lieutenant Sydney, indiscreet zeal of, iii. 136.
Solebay, British frigate, fights with American brig *Providence*, under Paul Jones, i. 74.
Somers, American brig, enters Vera Cruz harbor and fires the *Creole*, iii. 417; capsizes and drowns half her crew, *ib.*
Somers, American schooner, captured by the British, iii. 111.
Somers, American schooner, in battle of Lake Erie, ii. 295.
Somers overturned while chasing a blockade-runner, iii. 417.
Somers, Commandant Richard, assists in attack on the city of Tripoli, i. 359–367; blown up on the *Intrepid*, 378.
Somers, Captain, fights five duels in succession, iii. 315–317.
Somerset, Fulton ferry-boat, captures the blockade-runner *Circassian*, iv. 37.
Somerville, Captain Philip, assists in the attack on the *General Armstrong*, iii. 194.
Sorel River, invaded by "Wellington's Invincibles," iii. 135.
Soulé, Pierre, Senator and Minister to Spain, iv. 338.
South Carolina islands, as described by Jedidiah Morse, iv. 31.
Southampton, British frigate, flagship of Sir James L. Yeo, ii. 348.
Southcombe, Captain, fights off nine British barges, iii. 204.
Southern States dependent on commerce for necessaries of life, iv. 46; their lack of factories and mills before the Civil War, *ib.*
Southfield, Federal gun-boat, iv. 454.
Sparlin, British sloop, captured by the *Thorn*, i. 209.
Spitfire, American merchantman, stopped by the *Guerrière*, ii. 7.
Spitfire, British sloop, ii. 359.
Spies, New Orleans fishermen as, iv. 313.
Sproats, David, inhuman conduct of, i. 224.
Spy service of Federal government not as good as the Confederate, iv. 189.

Squaw Island, N. Y., the *Detroit* grounds on, ii. 278.
Stanton, Edward, Secretary of War, his views of the victory of the *Merrimac*, iv. 211–212.
Star of the West, Federal steamer, first shot of the Civil War fired at, iii. 363 ; taken by the Confederates, *ib.*
Stars and Stripes first saluted by a foreign power, i. 138.
State of Georgia, Federal warship, iv. 237.
Steamboats under fire of heavy guns, iv. 252.
Steam-rams, first fight of, in history, iv. 307.
Stembel, Captain R. N., before Fort Pillow, iv. 289 ; badly wounded, 294.
Sterrett, Lieutenant Andrew, sent to Tripoli, i. 335 ; appointed to command the *Enterprise*, ii. 373 ; captures the *Tripoli*, *ib.*
Stettin, armed merchantman, attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, iv. 474.
Stevens, Captain T. H., at Port Royal, iv. 163.
Stevens, Robert L., invents first ironclad, iv. 9.
Stevens, Commander Thomas Holdup, iv. 386 ; in charge of Federal fleet to carry Fort Sumter by storm, 494.
Stewart, Lord George, commander in the attack on the *Constitution* at Porto Praya, iii. 260.
Stewart, Captain Charles, sails from Boston, iii. 242 ; overhauls and captures the British war-schooner *Picton*, *ib.*; falls in with the British frigate *La Pique*, 243 ; finds the British frigates *Junon* and *Tenedos* lying in wait for him, 244 ; escapes to Marblehead, *ib.*; returns to Boston, 245 ; sails out of Boston while blockade squadron is off port, *ib.*; captures British merchant ship, *Lord Nelson*, *ib.*; chases the *Elizabeth*, but captures the *Susan*, 245 ; chased by the frigates *Tiber* and *Elszabeth*, 246 ; escapes, *ib.*; encounters the frigate *Cyane* and sloop-of-war *Levant*, 247 ; opens fire on both ships, 249 ; the *Cyane* surrenders to, 252 ; the *Levant* surrenders to, 255 ; sails to Porto Praya with his captures, 260 ; the *Newcastle*, *Leander*, and *Acasta* surprise him, 260 ; the *Newcastle* opens fire, 265 ; the *Constitution* sails away free, *ib.*; her last fight, 268.
Stivers, A. C., Chief Engineer of the *Monitor*, iv. 216.
Stockton, Captain Robert Field, succeeds Captain Sloat in command of the Pacific Squadron, iii. 394 ; lands and attacks Los Angeles, *ib.*; novel trick to deceive the enemy, *ib.*; organizes a state government, 397; is succeeded by Commodore Shubrick, 401 ; his trip on Ericsson's *Francis B. Ogden*, iv. 10 ; he induces Ericsson to come to America, 11 ; assigned to the *Princeton*, 14.
Stoddert, Benjamin, Secretary of of Navy, i. 334.
"Stone Fleet," sinking of the, iv. 470.
Stonewall Jackson, Confederate ironclad, iv. 333 ; rams the *Varuna* and sinks her, 334 ; is driven ashore by the *Oneida* and *Cayuga*, *ib.*
Stoney, Theodore D., Charleston citizen, builds, at his own expense, a number of "Davids," iv. 497.
Stringham, Flag Officer Silas H., assigned to command of Hatteras Island expedition, iv. 99.
Strong, Commander James H., iv. 389.
Submarine torpedo vessel, principles and construction of a, i. 165–170 ; experiments made to prove the nature and use of a, 172.
Sullivan's Island, Charleston, S. C., iv. 469.

Sumatra, attack of natives of, on American ship *Friendship*, iii. 368.
Sumter, Confederate gun-boat, rams the *Cincinnati* at Fort Pillow, iv. 293 ; surrenders, 302.
Sumter, Confederate ship, captured at Fort Pillow, iv. 302.
Sumter, Confederate cruiser, iv. 407 ; Captain Semmes takes command of, 408 ; captures the *Abby Bradford*, 412 ; cruises in the Caribbean Sea, 413 ; on the Brazil coast, 414 ; is chased by *Iroquois*, *ib.*; goes to Spain and Gibraltar, 415 ; expense of, to the Confederate Government, 416 ; sold and converted into an English merchant-ship, *ib.*; runs the blockade of Charleston, *ib.*; name changed to the *Gibraltar*, *ib.*; lost in the North Sea, *ib.*
Superior, American frigate, iii. 113.
Superiority of British naval crews, i. 60.
Superstition, sailors', iii. 78, 79.
Surprise, American brig, renamed the *Eagle*, iii. 139.
Surprise, American cutter, i. 123; captures the ship *Joseph* and the brig *Prince of Orange*, 124 ; detained in France by the British ambassador, 125.
Surveyor, American schooner, attacked and overpowered by the British frigate *Narcissus*, ii. 417.
Susquehanna, American ship, sent to Japan in 1851, iii. 443.
Susquehanna, Federal frigate, iv. 163.
Sylph, American schooner, ii. 349.
Symonds, Sir William, his opinion of Ericsson's *Francis B. Ogden*, iv. 10.
Tabasco, Mexico, captured by Commodore M. C. Perry, iii. 414.
Tacony, captured by Captain Read of the *Clarence*, iv. 424.
Tapanagouche, British schooner sent to capture Captain Jeremiah O'Brien, i. 23.
Tarbell, Captain, unsuccessfully attacks the becalmed British fleet in Hampton Roads, ii. 395.
Tartarus, English brig-sloop, iii. 93.
Tattnall, Commodore Josiah, takes part in the English attack on Chinese forts, iii. 382 ; attacks the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa in the siege of Vera Cruz, 420–423 ; commands a squadron of four vessels sent in to divert the attention of the Mexicans, 424 ; exchanges places with a brother officer on the *Constellation*, and so saves his life, 354 ; commands the Confederate fleet at Savannah, iv. 168 ; his worthless flotilla, *ib.*; attacked by the Federal fleet and retires, 171 ; destroys the *Merrimac*, 236, 237.
Tayloe, Lieutenant, killed while assisting the Union wounded out of the *Congress*, iv. 209.
Taylor, Captain John, chased by Captain Lawrence of the *Hornet*, ii. 181.
Taylor, Thomas E., leading blockade-runner, iv. 57.
Tea destroyed in Boston Harbor, i. 13.
Teaser, privateer of New York, ii. 245.
Teaser, American blockade-runner, iv. 60.
Tecumseh, British gun-boat, iii. 145.
Tecumseh, Federal monitor, iv. 386 ; sunk by a torpedo, 394.
Tenedos, British frigate, captures the American frigate *President*, iii. 222 ; goes in chase of the *Constitution*, 244.
Tennessee, Confederate ram, iv. 380.
Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers, how far navigable, iv. 240.
Tennessee opened up by the capture of Fort Henry, iv. 266 ; railroad communication cut off from, 267.

Terceira, a Portuguese island, officers and crew of the *Alabama* shipped from, iv. 431.
Terry, General Alfred H., at Fort Fisher, iv. 516.
Texas, Napoleon III. tries to persuade, to secede from the Confederacy, iv. 367–368.
Thalia, British frigate, ii. 29.
Thames, British frigate, attacks American gun-ship *Protector*, i. 207.
Thatcher, Master Charles, iv. 370.
Theodora, Confederate blockade-runner, carries Mason and Slidell to Cuba, iv. 141.
Thetis, British frigate, chased by Porter and escapes, ii. 38.
Thomas, American privateer, ii. 252.
Thompson, Confederate ram, sunk at Fort Pillow, iv. 302.
Thompson, Captain Egbert, before Fort Pillow, iv. 290.
Thompson, Captain Thomas, i. 130; sent to France for supplies, *ib.*; returns to America, 132–133.
Thorn, American privateer, attacks and strikes the *Governor Tryon* and *Sir William Erskine*, i. 209; captures the *Sparlin*, *ib.*; captured by the *Deane*, 284, 287.
Ticonderoga, American schooner, iii. 137–139.
Tigress, American schooner, in battle of Lake Erie, ii. 295; captured by the British, iii. 109.
Tilghman, General Lloyd, surrenders Fort Henry to Commodore Foote, iv. 265–266.
Tillinghast, Lieutenant T. G., iii. 81.
Tin-clads, light-draft steamers in Admiral Porter's squadron, iv. 349.
Tiptonville, Pope shuts Confederates in by occupying, iv. 276.
Toey-wan, steamer chartered by Captain Tattnall in the attack on Chinese forts, iii. 382–384.
Tombigbee Channel, Mobile, lined with torpedoes, iv. 406.
Tom Bowline, store-ship for Decatur's fleet, iii. 271.
Tompkins, American ship, ii. 352.
Toronto, Canada, Americans plan to attack, ii. 339; a force under General Dearborn sent to attack, 340; stores and prisoners taken, 342.
Torpedo boat, the first one built, i. 164; general principles and construction of a submarine vessel, 165.
Torpedoes made of whiskey demijohns, iv. 350.
Townsend, Commander Robert, iv. 369.
Trabangan, Malay settlement, natives of, capture the American merchant-ship *Eclipse* and kill Captain Wilkins, iii. 374–379.
"Tracking" up a river, ii. 287.
Trajano, Brazilian rebel warship, iv. 548.
Transit, New London merchant-ship, captured by Confederate privateers, iv. 97.
Treaty of Ghent, terms and conditions of, iii. 209; the real cause of the war ignored in the treaty, 210.
Tredegar Iron Mills, Richmond, Va., the only gun and engine factory possessed by the South at the outbreak of the Civil War, iv. 46.
Trenchard, Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, wounded in a fight with Chinese, iii. 382.
Trent, British mail steamer, Confederate Commissioners Mason and Slidell taken from, iv. 148; attitude of the British Government in regard to the seizure, 150–152; instructions to Lord Lyons, 152, 153; reply of Mr. Seward to the despatch of the British Government, iv. 154; review of Mr. Seward's reply, 154–158; Commodore Smith's comment on the reply, 156.

Trenton, United States cruiser, ashore at Samoa, iv. 554.
Trepassy, British brig, surrenders to the *Alliance*, i. 298.
Tribute, paid to Algerian pirates by America, iii. 339; by England, 340.
Tripoli declares war against America, i. 333; pays indemnity to United States, iii. 357.
Tripoli, war polacre, is beaten by the American schooner *Enterprise*, i. 335.
Tripolitans, treachery of, i. 335, 336.
Trippe, American sloop, in battle of Lake Erie, ii. 295.
Trippe, Sailing-master John, at attack on city of Tripoli, i. 366.
Tristan d'Acunha, Island of, in the South Atlantic, Jonathan Lambert pre-empts, iii. 270, 271; a breeding resort for seals, *ib.*; Decatur makes it a rendezvous, *ib.*
True Briton, captured by the *Randolph*, i. 160.
Trumbull, American galley, i. 89, 164.
Trumbull, American ship, captures two British transports, i. 164; cruises along American coast with a crew of landsmen, 290; is nearly disabled, 291; attacked by three British ships and surrenders, 295–297.
Truxton, Captain Thomas, captures prizes in the Azores, i. 205; cuts out three ships from the British fleet, *ib.*; fits out the *Mars* and cruises in the English Channel, *ib.*; involves France in war with England, 206; successfully beats off a British frigate, *ib.*; Captain of the *Constellation*, compels the French frigate *Vengeance* to fight, 323; loses her in the night, 328.
Truxton, American brig, grounded before Tuspan, Mexico, and is captured, iii. 410.
Tucker, John, Assistant Secretary of War, asks Commodore Vanderbilt his terms for destroying the *Merrimac*, iv. 212.
Tucker, Captain Samuel, captures thirty British vessels, i. 203.
Tunis, brought to terms by the American fleet, i. 378, 379; pays indemnity to United States for seizing the *Abellino* prizes, iii. 353.
Tuscumbia, Federal gun-boat in Porter's fleet before Vicksburg, iv. 363.
Tybee Bar, Savannah, coal-ships ordered to go to, iv. 165.
Unadilla, Federal frigate, iv. 163; attacked by the Confederate ironclad *Palmetto State*, 474.
Underwriter, Federal gun-boat, boarded and destroyed by John Taylor Wood, iv. 452.
Unicorn, British frigate, captures the *Raleigh*, i. 194.
United States, American frigate, built, i. 312.
United States Astronomical Expedition to the Southern Hemisphere, members of, iii. 464.
United States, frigate, falls in with the *Eurydice* and *Atalanta*, ii. 16; cruizes between the Azores and the Canary Islands, 121; encounters the *Macedonian*, 122; battle with, 125–134; losses after the battle, 139; comparison of the forces of the two ships, 140; blockaded in New London, 150.
United States Government abrogates all treaties with France, i. 314.
United We Stand, American privateer, ii. 253.
Valcour Island, Lake Champlain, fight between Benedict Arnold and Sir Guy Carleton at, i. 92–99.
Van Brunt, Captain G. I., iv. 99.
Vandalia, United States warship, sank at Samoa in a hurricane, iv. 554.
Vandalia, Federal sailing-ship, iv.

163 ; sails from Hampton Roads with a fleet of coal schooners in charge, 165 ; encounters a hurricane, 166.
Vanderbilt, Commodore Cornelius, asked for what sum he would destroy the *Merrimac*, iv. 212.
Van Dorn, Confederate gun-boat, rams the *Mound City* and disables her, iv. 294.
Varuna, Federal screw corvette, iv. 314.
Vaughan, Captain William, at Sackett's Harbor, ii. 267; drives off the British, 268.
Vengeance, American brig, in Paul Jones's fleet, i. 232.
Vengeance, French frigate, fight with the *Constellation*, i. 323 ; surrenders, 327 ; slips away in the night to Curaçao, 328 ; returned to France, 330.
Vera Cruz, Mexico, siege and blockade of, by Americans, iii. 417–424 ; the city captured, 424–427 ; the navy's part in the capture, 424.
Vergennes, Vt., Macdonough builds the *Saratoga* there, iii. 137.
Vesuvius, United States dynamite cruiser, iv. 540.
Veterans of the Peninsular War sent to subjugate America, iii. 135.
Vicksburg, Admiral Farragut's fleet arrives at, iv. 341 ; moves made against, by way of the Yazoo River country, 350 ; they failed, *ib.* ; General Grant arrives before, 351 ; Admiral Porter tries to get in behind, 358–363 ; Grant surrounds, 363.
Victor, British gun-boat, captures the *Hancock*, i. 185.
Vigilant, Federal merchant-ship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Vincennes, American ship, sent to Japan in 1845, iii. 440.
Vincennes, Federal war-ship, iv. 129 ; misunderstands signals, 133, 134.
Viper, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Virginia, American frigate, grounded in Chesapeake Bay, i. 186.
Virginia, English frigate, i. 284.
Virginia, a name given to the reconstructed *Merrimac*, but not used, iv. 189.
Vixen, American cruiser, in the attack on Tripoli, i. 374.
Vixen, American brig, captured by British frigate *Southampton*, ii. 348.
Vixen, American steamer, in attack on Alvarado, iii. 410.
Voluntaire, French frigate, i. 316.
Wabash, United States screw frigate, iv. 15 ; commanded by Captain Samuel Mercer, 99; Captain C. R. P. Rodgers, commander, 163.
Wachusett, Federal frigate, captures the *Florida*, iv. 424.
Wadsworth, Captain Alexander Scammel, appointed to the *Constellation*, iii. 327.
"Waggon, The," a contemptuous term applied to the frigate *President* by the British, ii. 360.
Wales, Captain R. W., fights a battle with the *Peacock*, iii. 68–71 ; surrenders, 71 ; his ship is carried into Savannah, 77.
Walke, Commander Henry, in charge of transport *Supply*, iv. 115 ; disobeys orders, *ib.* ; is court-martialed, 116 ; appointed to command the *Taylor*, 250 ; convoys General Grant down the Mississippi, 251 ; in command of gun-boat *Taylor*, 251 ; gallant conduct of, 252; his timely aid, *ib.* ; commands the *Carondelet* in Commodore Foote's fleet, 255 ; his seeming insolence to Commodore Foote, 266 ; commences the attack on Fort Donelson, 268 ; diverts the Confederates' attention from Grant, 271 ; successfully runs the *Carondelet* past the batteries of Island No. 10, 281 ; re-

sourcefulness of, 282; passes six forts, under fire of fifty guns, 283; aids the *Cincinnati*, 294.
Walker, American whaler, captured by the Peruvian crusier *Nereyda*, iii. 7.
"Wall-piece," a gun used in capturing the *Margaretta*, i. 17.
Wampanoag, Federal ironclad, iv. 472, 473.
War of 1812, events which led up to, i. 383; Great Britain fomented discord between the States of the Union, 384; used every means to harass American commerce, *ib.*; impressed men by force to serve on English ships, 386; used the press-gang in foreign ports, 387; demanded right of search on the high seas, *ib.*; used nothing to enforce an order but the cat-o'-ninetails, 389; American ships stripped of their crews, 397; five men off the *Baltimore* impressed in the British service, 401; the affair of the *Leopard* and *Chesapeake*, 402–413; case of the *Spitfire* and *Guerrière*, ii. 7; tricky conduct of the officers of two British frigates, 15; war declared, 28; justified by the *Trent* affair, iv. 140.
War-ship, the first submarine, i. 157; the first Yankee, on fresh waters, ii. 264; development of the, from 1815–1859, iv. 1–9.
Ward, Fleet Officer James H., his attack on the Acquia Creek batteries, iv. 81; killed, 82.
Ward, Samuel, Rhode Island delegate to Continental Congress, i. 31.
Warren, Fort, Mass., Mason and Slidell confined there, iv. 156.
Warren, American frigate, i. 280, 283.
Warrington, Master-commandant Lewis, iii. 66; attacks and captures the *Epervier*, 66–71; succeeds Porter in clearing the South American coast of pirates, 338.
Washington, American galley, i. 89; on Lake Champlain, 99.
Washington, George, and the Congress of the United Colonies, i. 27.
Washington, D. C., conduct of the British sailors at capture of, ii. 418, 419.
Wasp, schooner, of first American Navy, i. 40.
Wasp (No. 2), American sloop-of-war, fight with the *Frolic*, ii. 107–117; both the *Wasp* and the *Frolic* captured by the British frigate *Poictiers*, 118, 119; taken into the British navy and lost at sea, 119.
Wasp (No. 3), American sloop-of-war, cuts her way through British blockaders, iii. 81; fights and captures the *Reindeer*, 86–88; comparison of the two ships, 91; cuts out the *Mary* under the convoy of the *Armada*, and is chased by the *Armada*, 92; encounters the *Avon*, 93; fights and disables her, 97; the *Castilian* and *Tartarus* appear and chase the *Wasp* off, 97; captures two merchantmen and the *Atalanta*, 100; mysterious end of, 102–104.
Waters, Captain Daniel, assists in capturing a British troop-ship, i. 203; desperate fight with two British sloops-of-war, 209.
Water Witch, carries an exploring expedition to Parana, iii. 464.
Water Witch, Federal war-ship, iv. 129–133.
Watson, William H., Lieutenant, ii. 364; is cut down and carried off unconscious, *ib.*; captures a pirate schooner off South America, iii. 335.
Watt, British privateer, fights with the *Trumbull*, i. 291.
Webb, Confederate ram, iv. 352.
Weehawken, Federal ironclad, iv. 480.
Weitzel, General, in command of troops at Fort Fisher, iv. 513.

Welles, Gideon, Secretary of the Navy, his account of the effect that the raid of the *Merrimac* had upon a cabinet meeting at Washington, iv. 211.
Wellington, Duke of, on the character of the veterans sent to America, iii. 134.
"Wellington's Invincibles" invade the Sorel River, iii. 135; sent to New Orleans under Sir Edward Packenham, iii. 230.
Wellington, British gun-boat, iii. 143.
Wells, Clark H., Lieutenant-Commander, iv. 389.
West India pirates, iii. 324.
Western waters, ships of the line of battle on, iv. 249.
Westfield, Federal ship, destroyed by the Confederates, iv. 357.
West Wind, Federal merchantship, captured by Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, iv. 415.
Whaler, an armed British, transformed into a Yankee cruiser, iii. 9, 10.
Whaling fleet, British, taken by surprise, iii. 8–10.
Wheaton, Joseph, one of the capturers of the *Margaretta*, i. 16.
Whinyates, Captain Thomas, ii. 106; encounters the *Wasp* in a gale, *ib.*; gives battle to the *Wasp*, 107; wounded, 112; surrenders, 116; his ship recaptured by the *Poictiers*, 118.
Whipple, Abraham, in command of boats attacking the *Gaspé*, i. 9; commands American ship *Columbus*, 66; in charge of the *Providence*. 281.
Whiskey demijohns for torpedoes, iv. 350.
White River, Ark., Federal operations on, iv. 307.
White Squadron, formation of, iv. 531–554.
Whitehead, Federal gun-boat, iv. 457.
Wickes, Captain Lambert, in the fight with the *Shark*, i. 71; carries Franklin to France, 114; captures prizes, *ib.*; goes on a cruise in the Bay of Biscay, *ib.*; captures fifteen prizes, 118.
Wilderness, building war-ships and gun-boats in the, ii. 286.
Wilkes, Captain Charles, stops the British steamer *Trent* and takes off Mason and Slidell, iv. 144–160; sails into Boston, with his prisoners, 148, 149; his conduct commended by Secretary of the Navy Welles, *ib.*
Wilkinson, General, attempts to attack Montreal, ii. 271; expedition fails, 272; builds winter quarters on Salmon River, *ib.*
William, American merchantship, captured by the *Java*, ii. 153; recaptured by Captain Lawrence, of the *Hornet*, 181.
William S. Robins, merchantship, captured by Confederate privateers, iv. 97.
Williams, Richard, reports to the British Government on the *Trent* affair, iv. 150.
Williams, Captain John Foster, captures the British brig *Active*, i. 206; fights and blows up the British privateer *Admiral Duff*, 207; compels the frigate *Thames* to haul off, *ib.*
Williamson, Chief Engineer W. P., assists in the reconstruction of the frigate *Merrimac* into an ironclad, iv. 185–186.
Will-o'-the-Wisp, blockade runner, iv. 57; description of, *ib.*
Wilmer, American gun-boat, iii. 141.
Wilmington, N. C., a favorite resort of blockade-runners, iv. 41.
Wilson, Lieutenant-commander Byron, iv. 363–369.
Winnebago, Federal monitor, iv. 386.
Winona, Federal screw gun-boat, iv. 315.
Wissahickon, Federal screw gunboat, iv. 315.

Wolfe, British sloop-of-war, ii. 348.
Wood, Lieutenant John Taylor, iv. 189; boards and destroys the Federal gun-boat *Underwriter*, 452; his statement on the retiring of the *Monitor* from the fight, 230, 231.
Woodworth, Lieutenant S. E., iv. 364.
Woolsey, Lieutenant Melancthon, ii. 264.
Worden, Lieutenant John L., causes Fort Pickens to be reinforced, iv. 119; arrested and held prisoner for seven months, *ib.*; Captain of the *Monitor*, 205; begins the battle with the *Merrimac*, 219; gets to close quarters, 222; has his ship under good control, 212; disabled, 225; Lieutenant Greene succeeds him in command, 229; transferred to a tug and taken to Washington, 230; letter to him from his crew, 233; Captain of the *Montauk*, 480.
Wright, Governor, of St. John's, captured by Captain Selman, i. 203; released, *ib.*
Wyalusing, Federal gun-boat, iv. 457.
Wyer, Captain, captures four prizes in the Mediterranean, iii. 343.
Wyman, Captain R. W., at Port Royal, iv. 163.
Yankee squadron, first cruise of the, i. 48.
Yarmouth, British ship, attacked by the *Randolph*, i. 162.
Yarnall, Lieutenant, in the battle of Lake Erie, ii. 313; Perry leaves him in charge, 318.
Yellow fever decimates the crews of the American ships before Vera Cruz, iii. 418.
Yeo, Sir James L., placed in command of the British naval forces on Lake Ontario, ii. 348; captures the American brig *Vixen* in the West Indies, *ib.*; sends an insulting challenge to Captain Porter of the *Essex*, *ib.*; captures two schooners and supplies, *ib.*; meets Commodore Chauncey's squadron, 349; has some brushes with the enemy, 350–353; operations on Lake Ontario, iii. 114–126.
York, Confederate privateer, iv. 93.
Yucatan, Mexico, governed by the Americans during the Mexican War, iii. 414.

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